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A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

Winter • 1948-49

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World Citizenship and Good Group Relations — *Carl Binger*
Legends of the Child — *Mildred Ockert Waugh*
On the Report of the President's Commission
The Future of American Education — *Harold Taylor*
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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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Can We Live with Our Enemies?

THE LEADER of the Existentialists, Jean-Paul Sartre, has started an interesting political movement in France. If a recent report can be credited, he seems to believe that it is possible to unite in his "Fourth Force" members of all parties, including Stalinists and Fascists; that sincerity is all that is required; and that a way can be found to reconcile "communism and total liberty."

Nearly all Americans feel that the obstructionism and intransigeance of the Kremlin make Sartre's hope naïve. The refusal of Tito's Yugoslavs to go along with Moscow indicates, however, that there are variations in communism as there are in capitalism. In internal politics, the problem of the French is more complicated than ours. France already has a Communist party of several millions, and must somehow learn to live with them. A large number of Frenchmen who vote Communist are not members of the Russian Communist party. We too must learn to live with Communists, since for all of us it is one world or none. We have already learned that soft yielding on one side only is appeasement, and will get us nowhere, and that those who see red when communism is mentioned will not rid us of the Red Menace.

That may be our intransigence, as it is our naïvete to believe we can do it with slogans. We proclaim "freedom of enterprise" when we mean only freedom for money-making enterprise, and forget that science, scholarship, literature and the arts, teaching, public service, free discussion, are also enterprises which must have equal freedom, unless our society is to become what Hitler said it already was, a plutocracy.

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We shout down "the welfare state." Perhaps here too we might learn something from the Communists. All states are welfare states. The only justification for any form of political establishment is that it ministers to public welfare. If this were not true, the anarchists would be right. If we and the Russians both admitted we wanted welfare states, we might at least provide a basis for discussion with Stalin's successors.

In the meantime, it might help to rectify perspective if we recalled that communism as an economic system did not originate with Marx or the Russians. The story of Ananias is there to remind us that it was the economy accepted by all early Christian communities. We are told in the Acts that of the multitudes that accepted Christianity, none of them "said that aught of the things he possessed was his own but that they held all things common." Citizens who in a free society favor moving in this direction should not all be classed as subversive moral reprobates. There might still be belated Christians among them.

American democracy conceives human welfare under two main heads. The Declaration lists them as freedom and equality, the Constitution as the blessings of liberty and the general welfare. They are not coordinate and coextensive. Each limits the other. Historical circumstances at times set them at loggerheads. The problem of a democracy is to reconcile these ever recurring conflicts. So many civilizations, including democracies, have failed since they have not recognized that in a changing world they must continually create a humanly acceptable balance where no pre-established harmony exists. The advances of science and technology are not only particularly upsetting; they have reduced the margin of error which civilized societies can tolerate. In our democracy, the law is the statement of the recognized relationship between the claims of freedom and equality. Where Nazi, Communist or congressional committees can become privileged classes and try fellow citizens without recourse to law, democracy's first principle has been sacrificed, and we have a government of men and not of laws. If in some respects Sartre's notion seems presently naïve, it may at least help us to recognize the magnitude and nature of our problem.

Christian Gauss

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World Citizenship and Good Group Relations

Carl Binger

MEN and women of knowledge and good will have gathered together in London from many parts of the world to face their common problems, to share their thoughts, and, perhaps, also to give voice to their hopes and aspirations. We must keep the fact in mind that there can be no mental health, no world citizenship, no good group relations so long as the nations are faced with the brutal futility of war as a method of settling their differences. The prevention of war should be our first and our chief concern. It has been said that the best way to forestall an evil is to strive for the good which is its opposite.

A citizen, as I understand it, is a person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to its protection. He has a responsibility as well, to develop new forms of government better suited to his needs. There is at present no world government to which we feel we owe allegiance and which can give us protection. The nations are rent by hatred and suspicion of each other and the constant threat of violence. Far from being citizens of a united world, we are still denizens of a divided one. And yet, there is a growing awareness among thinking men and women that if we are to survive we must so develop our existing outworn and inadequate nationalist states that we can become part of a transcendent organization. This may seem a remotely quixotic dream. Actually, it is the only reality. Anything else is an anachronistic nightmare, because in the modern world, competitive sovereign states can no longer guarantee to protect the

⊙Associate professor of clinical psychiatry at Cornell Medical College, CARL BINGER won the Norton Medical Award in 1944 for his book, *The Doctor's Job.*

This article was the opening address at the International Congress on Mental Health. It was presented at Central Hall in London on Monday, August 16, 1948. The theme for the day was "Mental Health and World Citizenship."

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life and property of their citizens, or indeed protect them from total extermination. Almost everyone knows this in his heart, feels it and fears it. There is a heightened awareness among us of the world's difficulties. This puts a great burden upon us and cuts off the retreat into complacency. We are forced to seek help from each other. We feel like helpless orphans bereft of protective care. There is no asylum for us just now. Can we mature sufficiently to care for ourselves? Not until we can learn also to be concerned with others, whatever the sacrifices we are called upon to endure.

Through man's fabulous ingenuity we are already living physically in one world. The barriers that once divided us have melted away. The seven seas do not divide us, nor do the hills of Rome, nor the wall of China, nor the Maginot Line. But as we have grown near to each other physically we seem to be growing farther apart spiritually because our very nearness has increased the potential threat of our greed and our aggression. These have become more real and more menacing. They have kept us from seeing our common interests and have over-emphasized our differences.

Though we are united in space, we are still epochs apart in time. Civilization has not progressed uniformly all over the world. There are parts of the earth where primitive men are held together in tribal and parochial groups bound by the narrow ties of kinship and locality. They are alien to us; just as our modern organized industrial society is alien to them. If they are laggards in the march of progress, perhaps to them we seem to have sold our birthright for a mess of gadgets. And there are other peoples whose political philosophies and religious practices, whose goals and ideals, are so at variance with our own that to think that we live in the same world with them seems an unjustified extravagance. And there are still others who, though dwelling in ancient and mature civilizations, almost defy a mutual understanding. Indeed, we say of all such people that they are still worlds apart from us.

What is this thing called the world? It is not the terrestrial globe of geography. It is no less than mankind, the inhabitants of this earth, men and women and children bound together in smaller and larger units by common origin, or by tradition or habit, or sometimes in pursuit of similar goals. They talk hundreds of different languages

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and they worship almost as many gods. When we speak of world citizenship do we mean that these millions are to be organized into a whole, with a governing body and courts of justice; that the citizens of this unified world will some day enjoy protection and be guarded against exploitation? Even if this is only a remote dream, its existence is what gives us heart. I venture to suggest, however, that not many of us will see that bright day.

If we are ever to unite the multifarious peoples of our planet, we can do so only in the light of their existing natures, not by wishing that they were a heavenly host of angels. They are neither angels nor devils. They are human beings with human needs, appetites, aspirations and fears. Two properties, among many others, are common to all of them and are worth emphasizing: the tendency to gather into groups and the urge to survive. These are, of course, interrelated. The species could obviously not survive unless individuals gathered into groups. Reduced to simple terms, this means that, with few exceptions, men and women want to continue to live on this earth, even in squalor and misery; and, with few exceptions, they will guard the lives of their offspring even at the cost of their own.

When his survival is threatened, man quickly marshals his defenses. Fear takes possession of him. His aggression is mobilized and his inventive genius is put to the service of protecting himself and destroying his enemy. He does not stop to think that by his maneuvers he may also be undoing himself, that in the rivalry for possession, power and prestige the race is not always to the swift, and that the fruits of victory may turn to the ashes of despair.

According to Toynbee, nineteen of twenty civilizations have gone to their death through war or internal conflicts or some combination of the two. If we cannot learn to prevent war, then not only is civilization fated to annihilation, but the human species as well. "But we are not doomed," says Toynbee, "to make history repeat itself; it is open to us, through our own efforts, to give history, in our case, some new and unprecedented turn. As human beings, we are endowed with this freedom of choice, and we cannot shuffle off our responsibility upon the shoulders of God or nature. We must shoulder it ourselves. It is up to us."

These are great words. They contain the challenge to which we

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must respond. What new and unprecedented turn can we give to history to insure the survival and the betterment of our civilization? I do not believe that a prophecy of doom will stay our hands from self-destruction, nor will the knowledge and experience of the unspeakable horrors of modern war. It has often been said that when warfare became sufficiently terrible and devastating, men would desist from it. Thus far it has not been so. It is to my mind a false reading of the motives that impel men to destroy rather than to create and, above all, to destroy what they have created.

Creation and destruction come from the same raw stuff. They are both the expression of life-force, the *élan vital* of Bergson. Whether this will assert itself in building up or in tearing down, whether in drawing people together in mutual confidence, or driving them apart in suspicion, fear and hatred, is a matter for our greatest concern.

I do not believe that the good is only a "reaction formation" against the bad, that man's creative impulses are simply ways of dealing with and taming his destructive ones, that love is an outward negation of hate. It may be true that they are made of the same raw material and stem from common drives, but that is far from saying that one is simply a negative of the other or a defense against it. A cathedral is not the same as the mass of rubble into which it may have disintegrated. Indeed, I am willing to go further than this and to assert that the constructive and cohesive forces, both in the individual and in society, will spontaneously find their way if certain limiting and constricting ones are removed; more especially fear and anxiety.

But if man has the possibility of a good life, even the will for it, why does he so frequently choose the opposite—death and destruction? It is not enough to say that he is a predatory and warlike animal, nor to be content with the assumption that war is the logical outcome and expression of mass aggression. Indeed, I think there is good reason to question such an assumption. Modern war could as well be blamed on the inertia of men, on their dull-witted imagination, on a certain lack of ingenuity, resourcefulness and planning, on belief in magic and in their own invulnerability, on miscalculation, on fear of attack—sometimes unwarranted—and above all, on the timorous, ignorant suggestibility of masses of people.

One thing is clear, and that is that war on the grand scale cannot

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easily be attributed to a single cause. In this it resembles those psychosomatic illnesses that come as a culmination of a long chain of interrelated circumstances, the final breakdown of an unstable balance of forces. No matter how much one may hate the capitalist system and inveigh against it, to lay the cause of war at its door is a short-sighted over-simplification. There are economic causes, of course, and racial ones and religious ones and combinations of all of these. And there are ancient traditional hatreds and suspicions, outraged feelings and hurt pride. All may contribute to the final catastrophe.

It is unlikely that any simple statement can explain this enormously complicated phenomenon. That there are subjective factors at work is clear enough. These deserve the attention of professional psychiatrists and sociologists, partly because we have some expert knowledge in this province. Professor Theodore Abel, the American sociologist born in Poland, makes a good point when he urges giving up the vain search for the causes of war and turning instead to "a study of the *pattern* according to which a war situation develops." In this pattern the "element of decision" is an essential part. There is little evidence for the prevailing view that war begins in a kind of spiral movement of public opinion that gets out of control and ends in a stampede. This is a secondary, rather than a primary process. But there is much evidence for believing that individuals or groups, holding some special political or economic power, lay the plans for war well in advance of the event. The group in power, when threatened, often faces the alternative of resigning or resorting to violence. The decision to engage in hostilities is based upon a careful weighing of chances; among them must be reckoned not only relative military strengths and what is now called industrial potential, but—and this is very important from the sociologist's and psychiatrist's point of view—the ability to stir up community and national sentiment.

From the examination of documents it appears that the decision to make war is reached, in most instances, from one to five years before the actual outbreak of hostilities. As examples, Abel cites the European coalition against revolutionary France, which began in 1792 but was planned at least fifteen months before; the outbreak of war between Austria and Serbia in 1914, for which the ultimatum was decided upon as early as March, 1909; and again, Mussolini's

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ill-fated Ethiopian campaign, for which the date-line was set a good two years before the invasion.

If this historical analysis is sound, as I strongly suspect it is, then what can medical and social scientists contribute to the prevention of war? This should be the real, the chief concern of our gathering. Why should we waste our time discussing world citizenship and good group relations if we cannot contribute to the solution of this problem? If we cannot do this, we might as well go home to enjoy a short reprieve and cultivate our gardens; for there will be no world for us to be citizens in and the groups with whose good relations we are here concerned will turn into miserable, frightened, orphaned starvelings.

It seems to me unlikely that we can reach a solution to the greatest of all human problems by moral exhortation; although it is true that if all men were good the problem would not exist. We cannot conquer the great pestilences of man by shaking an admonishing finger at him and saying it is dirty and wrong to have typhus fever or bubonic plague or small pox, or malaria or yellow fever. The control of these plagues has been won by understanding their means of transmission, even before we knew the etiological agent that caused them. Just so we will not prevent war by telling men that it is foolish and nasty to fight, that they should be as brothers and love one another. For thousands of years they have been told that, and yet, successive generations have fought wars, each more ferocious and more destructive than the preceding one.

We need to know more about the means of transmission of war fever, how the infection spreads, and why it is no longer a localized endemic, but so quickly reaches pandemic or global proportions. We need to know how to isolate the sources of infection; i.e., how to check the activities of ruthless power groups, and then to confront them with such a coalition of forces that their calculations for success will be overwhelmingly negated.

This implies a great extension and development of those democratic processes that are the only safeguards yet devised against tyrannical usurpation of power. We cannot foist those processes on countries where they are unwelcome or will not take root. We must respect other cultures and permit them to experiment. But the democracies

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can strive to perfect their own experiment. If they do not, they will soon degenerate, and themselves be taken over by power groups. If they do, then they can show the world by their freedom from persecution and intolerance, by equality of opportunity and fair play, and by a high standard of living, that they have achieved a form of government in which men can live together in relative harmony. Such men will be less quickly stampeded into war. They will guard their hard-won rights, and they will combine with others to thwart an aggressor's chances of success—or, if need be, to crush him.

War fever must also be controlled if we are to prevent war. The stampeding process is not, in my opinion, primarily the result of mass aggression, but rather is precipitated by fear and anxiety, fear of actual invasion and destruction of homes and loved ones, or anxiety induced in the masses by the group whose power is in jeopardy. Unless their homeland is endangered, most men have to be cajoled, shamed or coerced into going to war. As they have given up, in the main, robbery and murder in their private lives, so too they do not easily lend themselves to organized killing without a good deal of provocation or preparation.

Indeed the form and character of modern warfare does little to satisfy our aggressive impulses. For every bayonet thrust there are thousands of hours spent in factories and in mines, at drafting boards and with precision instruments, in laboratories and in exhausting debate, discussion and conferences, not to mention hours of waiting endlessly in queues and shivering miserably in foxholes. Even in the front line of attack those men fight best, not who hate the enemy with unbridled ferocity, but who trust and admire their commanding officers and love their messmates.

What war gives us is something else, if not an outlet for our aggression. It gives us a wonderful feeling of being united in a great cause. It renews our loyalty and our patriotism, and it holds out the illusory hope to many, of relief from humdrum, routine and domestic responsibility.

These are some of the moral equivalents that we must study to provide. In his last public utterance William James said, "The war against war is going to be no holiday excursion," and yet I venture to say that not one simple man or woman in the world wants war;

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that what they want is, in Mr. Churchill's words: "A fair chance to make a home, to reap the fruits of their toil, to cherish their wives, to bring up their children in a decent manner and to dwell in peace and safety, without fear of bullying or monstrous burdens and exploitations. That is their hearts' desire."

But there is no good in this world that can be gained without sacrifice. If now the nations are called upon to renounce some of their sovereignty and to unite in a world organization that works, not only against war, but for peace and sufficiency and health, how little of a loss is there in such sacrifice? Unless this organization is granted authority and power over and above that of its separate constituents, we shall, as Abraham Lincoln said, "meanly lose the last best hope of earth."

But we can still nobly save it. Medical and social scientists, who specialize in the study of man and his relations, must marshal all their knowledge and their best intelligence to grapple with the problem of how to prevent war; how to wall off the source of infection emanating from power groups; how to interfere at every possible point with its spread; how to build men and women who can resist these infections.

In six short days we cannot fulfill so stern an ambition, but we can make a start here and now. If the prevention of war is our steadfast goal, then we shall have a better chance of reaching an agreement on the many subjects that will come before us for study and discussion. But the world cannot be saved by scientific conferences. If it is given to us to find the right answers to some of these problems, then we must use our psychological insights to persuade statesmen and politicians to give us a hearing and to act on our findings. They would not think of trying to wage wars without the help of scientists—physical, medical and even now, social and psychological. But they manage to begin wars which these same scientists might enable them to prevent. We must give up being isolated esoterics. We must speak a language that others can understand. If we do, they will hear us. We must join them in all humility and dedicate ourselves to the needs of mankind, with respect and reverence for the rights of common men and women. For today only a citizen of the world can be a true scientist.

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Legends of the Child

Mildred Ockert Waugh

THE LEGENDS of the childhood of Christ come down to modern times in Arabic, in Persian, in Greek and in Latin. You can read them curiously, as refracted history, trace the frayed threads of Jewish lore, note the gildings of the gayer Gentile mind, indulge the anachronisms and confusion of pagan and Jewish custom, and smile on the gentle propaganda of the early Fathers. But for real and satisfying pleasure, read them instead as tales told by the men and women who had known Mary and Joseph and the Child—who wanted their friends, their children, and even the casual stranger, to share their memories and recollections.

In all the tales of the infancy which have come down to us, Mary, the mother of Jesus lives as a simple, humble woman, her exquisite future as the "Queen of Heaven" unprojected. She could be any mother, bearing a child, living in and for that child, watching and wondering what God might intend—unself-conscious and without pretense for herself, molding her son as best she might through the years. Mary is always kind—as though the early chroniclers felt that only an all-loving mother could train a child whose adult message would be the principle of infinite Love.

But in the stories about the Child, the tellers of the tales seem to be trying to join things known with things heard and unaccountable.

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The legends of the childhood of Christ have been collected from translations of fragments of early manuscripts: the Gospel of the Childhood of Christ according to St. Peter; the Protevangelium of James the Lesser; the Gospel of the Infancy used by the Gnostic sect of the second century; the Second Gospel of the Infancy, a fragment of manuscript in the Greek Gospel of Thomas, originally connected with the Gospel of Mary; and from later Latin translations of the early texts.

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Small vanities, pride, fears, unruliness and impish cruelty: these they know as part of all young human heritage. Only with years of growing and learning—they seem to reason—could even a God-child achieve wisdom and courage enough for an entirely selfless use of infinite power. So the legends of the boyhood show a growing child in whose young hands power is not always guided by mature and inspired knowledge.

The apocryphal legends of the childhood of Christ stem from the world of Palestine as it was at the end of the first century. The people called Christians existed in small groups within the great Jewish congregations. They met with other Jews in the synagogues, and followed the old forms; but they looked for the quick return of the remembered Christ as the ultimate Messiah of thousands of years of Hebrew promise.

Mark had not set down in writings as yet the recollections of Christ which he was gathering from Peter. Matthew and Luke had not added their words to Mark's. Paul was in and out of Jerusalem on his missionary journeys. James, the brother of Jesus, was directing the small beginnings of an organized church; and John was caught already in the struggle of reconciling Jewish and Gentile reaction to the story of Jesus.

These were the days when old men and women were recalling all that they could remember about Jesus, answering questions, and occasionally writing down anecdotes to be passed from hand to hand. Tales were told in Nazareth, in Bethlehem, in Jerusalem—in all the cities of David. Legends were growing, and the time for ascertaining facts was almost past.

Who was this Jesus? This Mary? And what about Joseph?

These, then, are the legends of that early day, the picturesque gossip of history. Here, in imaginative language and possible events, appears a slanted outline of the time-veiled face of truth. Some of the legends are golden, some are silver; some hover in the enchanted air like moonlight on eternal fountains, and some wander down the centuries with the sure simplicity of children going barefoot along familiar paths. Of all the legends which history preserves, few shine with a more lively radiance than these stories of Mary and the Child Jesus.

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I

And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. . . .

The small scarab beetle, Egypt's symbol of eternity, saw all things which happened. Perched on a vantage beam over the entrance of the stable-cave near Bethlehem, he looked in and out through the crack he had chosen for the night, and as he watched he teetered lustily to hold his balance in the gathering delight.

The man called Joseph, hurrying down the road toward the town, stopped suddenly. The woman coming toward him stayed her steps while a silent strangeness flowed through the world. Clouds hung motionless. The wind held its peace. "Laborers beside the road whose hands were in their bowl of meat, on the point of eating, did not eat, and with their outstretched hands took nothing, but remained motionless. Shepherds raised staves over the dozing herds, but the hands did not fall. At a river, rams stood, whose beards touched the water, but they did not drink, for heaven and earth and all things living were waiting." On its way across the sky a pale star stopped, and its soft light changed to the brilliance of midday.

Then the man called Joseph turned back to the cave and brought with him the woman called Midwife. Within the stable all was star-dust and ecstasy. Angels with shimmering wings bent over the woman called Mary and scattered stars and soft roses on her breast, where a wondrous child lay laughing. A small brown bird who could not sing found voice for a lullaby. An ox and an ass would have gone out of the stable, but so many angels were there and so much shining light, that they turned back and fell on their knees and looked up at the Child.

Midwife said: "Art thou the mother of this child?" Mary said: "I am." Midwife said: "Thou art not like other women." Mary said: "There is no other child like my son."

Then the small bird which had sung the lullaby fanned the glow from a fallen star with his wings, so that the Child might be warmed, and the glow stayed red on his breast forever. The small beetle came out of his crack. He had seen so much, he would hurry and tell his

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friends. But first he would fly close to one of the angels to see what an angel was like. For his boldness, the angel, laughing, took a sparkling jewel from her hair and touched the little beetle's tail into the perpetual brightness of the firefly, so that his whole body pulsed with joy. And he forgot his friends and went back to dream in his crack above the entrance to the cave.

II

And when the Wise Men were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. . . .

It seemed best to Mary and Joseph to go to the ancient city of "On" where Moses had lived and been educated and where Joseph of old, sold into slavery by his brothers, had lived with his wife Asenath. They would settle in the village of Matariya, not far from the great pyramid of Gizeh in the midst of Mary's people and kinsfolk, who had never left the lands to the far south of Judea. Even with their destination known, the way would be long, but the Child would ease the dangers and Mary would be always kind and merciful.

The heart of the small beetle pulsed with joy. For him this meant an unexpected going home to the land of his origins. He would flutter along beside these people whom he had come to love, or he would ride jauntily perched on one of the burro's long ears, and the Child would smile happily at the little light which the angel had given on that memorable night.

The Beasts

On the first night wild beasts from the mountains threatened them, coming close in the darkness—hyenas, jackals, lions, leopards, wolves —but the Child smiled on the beasts, and they worshiped him, and helped to guide the travelers through dangerous cuts in the mountains until they all came safely to the first city. And there Mary, fearing for the safety of their wild friends, sent the animals back to the hills. "For many," she said, "do not know how much gentleness dwells in the souls of wild beasts."

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False Gods

When the journey began to seem too long, the Child shortened the way by thirty days and brought them into the city of Sotina, where stood a temple peopled with rows of gold and silver idols whose heads were like bulls and lions. The idols' faces were made of shining marble set with precious stones for eyes.

When Mary and Joseph and the Child came to this place, there occurred a great trembling of the earth and the idols cast themselves down from their pedestals and worshiped the Child; but the people who lived in the city were frightened and ran away, so that the travelers found themselves deserted by all except the son of the temple priest—a boy in torment from an evil spirit, but unacquainted with fear.

When this son of the temple priest came to where Mary was washing the Child's clothes, he snatched one of the bands which was drying on a post, and put it on his head and danced for mischief's sake. Thereupon his torment left him, and he was cured, and the Child laughed aloud with delight.

Playtime

But the Child did not spend all of his time doing good deeds. Sometimes leaving his mother's lap, he would toddle away into the fields, enjoying the cool of the evenings, the light of the fireflies, the murmur of waters and the songs of the night birds. At such times he would play with the small scarab, hiding him behind tufts of sweet grass. Or angels would come and play games with them, bringing stars from heaven which they tossed like balls. All would join hands in a dancing circle; or they would play a game of counting feathers in the angels' wings, and in this last game the prize was always for the Child, because he never dropped any feather, or burned one in the flame of the stars. And while they rested, the Child would tell the angels stories of heaven and earth.

Rest

In the end the travelers came to Matariya; and under a sycamore tree in the center of the village near a well, the Child lay down to rest, for it was noontime and the sun was hottest. With his sweat came a deep perfume.

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When the Child wakened, Mary washed his damp clothing in the water from the well. When her washing was finished, she scattered the water about, and there sprang up the aromatic balsam plant which now abounds in that country.

In the City of Memphis

After Mary and Joseph and the Child had lived in Matariya for two years, they journeyed to Memphis, and there the ruler of Egypt sent for the Child to question him—fearing that through this boy troubles would come to the Egyptians as they had come in the days of Moses.

A day came when the Child stood before the ruler of Egypt with a stem of lilies in his small hand, and answered his questions with outstanding words and deeds.

The Ruler said: "Moses came to this kingdom and brought much suffering. Art thou not like Moses?" The Child said: "I come after Moses as the dawn after night. I bring neither anger nor vengeance, and wherever I go, gardens will grow where only nettles grew before."

The Ruler tried to tempt the Child, saying: "Surely that wand in thy hand, turned toward the river, will make the waters run with blood." But the Child bent his flower to the waters, and the river flowed with sweet milk, to the pleasure of the Egyptians.

"There will be lice in the dust, if you stretch out your hand?" Instead the dust, at the Child's gesture, was filled with seeds which scattered with the breeze and made all the fields fertile.

"What kind of flies will you bring to molest us?" But the Child brought bees which built hives and satisfied the people with quantities of fine honey.

"Our horses and cattle? Will they die?" In answer the Child climbed into his mother's arms and nestled down, while all the animals brought forth young.

"Thou wilt scatter ashes from the fires, and men and beasts will suffer boils?" Instead, all who had these ailments in the country the Child cured on that day.

"There will be hail to break the flowers and destroy the trees?" But the hail, when it came, clung to the trees and turned into roses

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and blossoms; thunderbolts tilled the fields, opening the ground so that fine trees grew up and shaded the entire land of Egypt.

"There will be locusts?" Instead there were thousands of bright-colored birds singing happily, and the grass which fed the flocks grew lush and thick.

"There will be terrible darkness?" But instead light came as though there had been no light before.

"The first born shall die?" Instead all the young boys who slept in the earth of Egypt rose up alive and happy; and tears of joy ran down the face of the ruler of Egypt.

III

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. . . . And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth . . .

When the message came that the time for them to return to Nazareth was at hand, Joseph was greatly distressed, even though definitely directed in his dream; for he had heard that Archelaus, who was now governor in Judea, was a man like Herod in temper, and in eagerness to destroy the Jews.

The Child was now a boy of six, tall for his age and alert to all that passed around him. Knowing of Joseph's dilemma, the Boy approached him and, pointing to a withered briar bush, he asked: "Wouldst thou dare to pass through this little bush?" Joseph answered: "There would be no danger surely in going through such a small dead bush." Then the Boy showed Joseph another bush, green and full of thorns. But that bush Joseph would not go through. So the Boy built a bright fire which consumed both the green bush and the withered bush, and said to Joseph: "Surely God hath power equal to that of the flame on the small bushes. What matters evil or more evil to God?"

And Joseph understood the Boy's meaning, but nevertheless they returned not through Judea but by the safer sea route, through the cities of Ashdod, Iamnia and Joppa, where the people were in the

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majority Greek; and they came safely to Nazareth. But the small scarab which had delighted the Child stayed behind in the land of his origins.

Power Well Used

As often as the children played together, they made the Boy king, and built him a throne and brought garlands of flowers to crown him. Anyone who passed along the highway, they would bring before him, saying: "Come give the King, hail." And many came, enjoying the pretty play. But it so happened one day that a crowd came along the road in great haste and agitation, carrying a youth on a litter. And the youth was near death, for he had gone to the mountains to gather wood, and turning aside, had reached forth his hand to take eggs from a partridge's nest, only to be stung by a viper which lay coiled in the nest.

Many in the crowd wanted to hurry on to the town with the youth, but the Boy persuaded them to go back with him to the nest where the youth had been bitten, and when he called out to the viper, it came from its hiding place and sucking back the poison from the dying boy, itself died quickly of its own venom. And so the youth lived.

Fore-Knowledge

Now the mothers amused themselves one day asking what each child wanted to be when grown to manhood, and the children answered as they knew of the various trades of the day. One would be a dyer and enjoy the bright colors. Another would be a jeweler and grow rich through traffic in gems. Another would be a soldier and "go among the people with clanking arms and bellowing terribly upon a trumpet." One would be a gardener. But the Boy said that he would be what his Father had willed him to be—King of the Jews —whom all nations would worship. The mothers laughed at such vainglory and thought to tease him. Would his throne be of gold or of silver or of ivory? But the Boy said: "My throne will not be made of gold, nor of silver, nor of ivory, but of wood. And if you will come with me, I will show you the tree of which it shall be made."

Then he took them to a brook near which a small oak tree was

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coming out of the ground and said: "Behold the throne that shall be." He began to cry bitterly, but the mothers could not see any reason for his tears.

Against the Law

One Sabbath afternoon when the children were playing together beside a river, they made ditches in the sand and filled them with water, which they brought in their hands. But the water came into the Boy's ditch of its own accord without hands. The children also made rude birds out of the soft clay and set them on the sides of a pool, playing happily until one carried the tale to Joseph that they were working in their play on the Sabbath day.

So Joseph came quickly to punish them, but the Boy stooped down and tossed his clay birds into the air and stamped his foot, and the birds spread their wings and flew away. And as the water seeped out of the pool, the one who had carried the tale to Joseph felt his strength ebbing also, and when the pools were dry that one was dead.

Justice without Mercy

Again on an evening when the Boy heard his mother's voice calling him for the evening meal, he left his play and started toward home, running. Another boy, also running and not seeing, ran into Mary's son so that he almost fell with the impact. The Boy said: "Since thou hast injured me, life will go out of your body." And he went home crying, not because he was hurt, but because he had dealt justice without mercy.

Mischief

When the Boy played with the other children, he was always distressed if they ran away and would not play with him; and once, when they were hiding from him in one of the ovens where the women did their baking, he decided upon mischief. He called to his companions, saying: "Come hither. Come hither. Little lambs to your shepherd." And out of the furnace they came skipping gaily, little lambs. But the mothers were in such fright at this kind of play, that the Boy turned each child back into his natural form.

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Vindication

While the children played on one of the flat roofs of the houses, one fell and hit his head on a stone and died. The frightened children ran to their homes, but the Boy stayed, and when the angry parents of the dead child accused him he said: "No one pushed him. He fell while playing." But the parents did not believe his story, so the Boy bent over the face of the dead Zeinon and questioned him, and the voice of Zeinon answered: "I fell, pushed by no one." And the parents believed.

Power Abused

When it was time for the Boy to go to school—for he must study the Hebrew scriptures until his tenth year—Joseph took him to Zaccheus the schoolmaster, who wrote out an alphabet for him and explained the sounds of the letters.

When it was the Boy's turn to pronounce "Aleph," he addressed the teacher saying: "Tell me first the meaning of 'Aleph,' and I will pronounce 'Beth.' " In anger and affronted, the schoolmaster raised his hand. Those who were gathered there saw that it had withered at the wrist, and that the Boy was untouched.

Joseph tried another teacher, and this man also talked to the Boy as had Zaccheus; then, turning to Joseph, he said: "Take the Boy home. I cannot teach him, for he instructeth the teacher." And the Boy said: "Since thou hast spoken so truly, so shall the hand of Zaccheus be healed in recompense."

But Mary said: "We will not let him go from home, for whoever displeases him is injured or dies by his power." And the Boy stayed at home, being taught by Mary and Joseph for two years.

In the House

There were many tasks to be done about the house in Nazareth. The walls must be washed down, and the threshold scoured.

It happened one day that Mary sent the Boy to the well to bring water, but the pitcher slipped from his head as he was carrying it, and broke into pieces. Mary said nothing, but was amazed to see that not one drop of the water was lost, for the Boy caught it in his mantle and none seeped through the thin cloth.

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When Mary had washed the walls of the house with the water, she was still more amazed. For they seemed to shine like gold, and the threshold step, when it was scoured, seemed like white marble. And when she tossed the rest of the water aside, a lily sprang up by the doorstep, and a small snake which was crawling in the grass tasted one drop and writhed and fell asunder.

With the Boy in the house, Mary found that any washing which she spread to dry folded itself and went into the closets without hands. Her fires did not have to be kindled, but started when needed. Beds made themselves, and other tasks seemed to accomplish themselves before she could begin them. And the Boy would be laughing, enjoying her confusion.

In the Workshop

Joseph found that as the Boy worked with him, learning to be a carpenter, chairs and tables were finished almost as soon as he began work on them. So the fame of Joseph traveled, and the King of Jerusalem sent for him to come and build a special throne for him to fit a special place. Joseph worked on the throne for two years, but when it was finished it proved to be short by the measure of two spithames, and the King was angry. When Mary and the Boy visited Joseph, they found him in this difficulty. The Boy said: "I will stand on one side, and you stand on the other, and we will draw the throne to fit the space." And it was done, and the throne was beautiful, made from the wood of the cedar tree under which Solomon, David's son, had sat in the forest of Lebanon.

A Neighborly Kindness

When the Boy was ten years old, he went on a journey with his father and some of the friends of Joseph along the Jericho road. On the way, they came to a place where there was great danger from a lioness who had her cubs in a cave so that the road was blocked. But the Boy led the beasts out and across the Jordan River, whose waters opened to let them pass, and the Boy said: "Go in peace." The lions wagged their tails and bowed their heads and "spoke gently to the Boy in their own language."

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IV

And . . . they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. . . .

Now the Boy is a youth of twelve years, trained by Mary and Joseph and by his Aunt Elizabeth—good people well versed in the Hebrew scriptures. He has been dedicated to the spiritual life by vows assumed by his parents at the time of his birth. Although his upbringing has been simple, the Boy is still the scion of David, connected also in his line of descent with the land of Moab. As he comes of age, there are three possibilities before him, the story runs. He may choose to renew his religious vows and follow the way of the prophets, as his cousin John will do. He may become a student in a community such as the Essenes, or go to the centers of learning in Egypt and India, even to the monasteries of Lhasa, preparing himself to become a great teacher. Again, he may choose to wear the coat of many colors of the house of David, and gather his people for one last effort toward freedom from the conquering Romans.

The learned men before whom the Boy stands in the Temple may well feel impelled to examine him closely and to wonder whither his manifold inheritance may lead.

But on this day no angel hosts are visible, no singing voices are heard. There are no stars and portents. The accepted story is simple and brief. Missing the Boy in the crowd which is wending homeward from the great festival lately celebrated in Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph have sought the Boy for many hours, having had to return all the way to the city to find him. When they come upon him finally, talking to the wise men in the Temple, they reprove him for bringing anxiety upon them.

The iridescence of legends has merged with the more opaque substance of documented history. Out of the nimbus of legend which had grown concerning the childhood, a last fact emerges succinct and plain. The Boy has made his first contact with the reality of the larger world; but the time is not yet, and he "goes down with his parents again to Nazareth and is subject unto them."

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Cantus Deo Mortuo

D. C. Allen

Here in this long December of the hills
The mountain ash shows like a spattered wall
Against which the inexorable chase
Of arrows scattered when the savage grace
Of light went out. The hungry barrow lies
Half-starved in granite and the slow hawk's fall
Alone remembers them. The briar writhes
With antique pain, recapturing once more
The hammering of the god upon the door.

Can we go down again this narrow way?
At the heart's Greenwich all the clocks are done
With striking and are jangled out of breath;
Can we go back against this flesh and death
That blocks our sight, O walkers against sorrow?
We stumble though we follow through the sun-
Accustomed roads, and yesterday's tomorrow
Dries like the unbaked loaf among the coals
Of silent fires laid for our feast of souls.

(over)

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Are our feet surer or our eyes more clear
Than the corn maidens' when the madness ate
Through the piled fears that kept the god in pain
Transcendent in the growing; and the grain
Moist in the earth stirred like his sweated beard?
For joy rose here, and there the curdled hate
Sank downward like the strengthless hero sheared,
Implacable, as hands stretched forth to him,
For weakness fleshed unwings the seraphim.

We cannot go as priests or worshipers;
Our lyres are stringless and our subtle urn
Has emptied out its tears. Unblessed we make
A mind's obeisance for the body's sake
Before the vacant shrine. The tongueless word
That dwells in shattered skulls does not return
To fell the echoes; but the grass has heard
That mortal music once when like a horn
It shook its thunder through the striving corn.

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On the Report of the President's Commission . . .

The Future of American Education

Harold Taylor

THE report of the President's Commission on Higher Education has already done useful service. It has sorted out the liberals from the conservatives. It has set educators discussing the future of America. It has welcomed very warmly the next generation of American youth. It has disclosed those who are nostalgic for an élite of the social order—an élite of the white, the well-to-do and the clever. It has done a number of things of this kind, simply by stating clear propositions to which twenty-seven American educators could for the most part agree, thus producing a series of reactions from other educators. Opinion has grouped itself, spiritually, politically and morally, all the way from the delight shown by I. L. Kandel and Robert Lynd in the report's liberal ideals, to the extreme right wing —where Father Gannon, who feels that education has been in a steady decline since the twelfth century, calls it an educational fraud, and where Mr. Hutchins, who feels that the report is too earnest and energetic, implies that in any case, the whole of American education is slightly vulgar and there is too much of it already.

The fact is that the report makes some strong remarks about what should be done in American education, and, in an unequivocal way, supports a liberal philosophy of social and educational change. This is its major contribution.

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It consistently aids the liberal trends in American life. Everywhere in its argument, education is conceived as a factor in social change. Its deepest philosophy is that American and world society, as well as the society of events in the universe, are in a continuous state of organic change. The extent to which man can influence such change for ends which he conceives to be desirable, is measured by the power of liberal values in contemporary life. This, in turn, is measured by the power of the individual intelligence, released from economic and social prohibitions, and given, in our colleges and universities, the gifts of knowledge and free thought by which it can grow. Therefore, says the Commission, we must attack at once the things which are now preventing the liberation of human resources and talents. We must draw out talent from everywhere, find college tuition money for those who have none, give opportunity to those without it, stop the segregation of Negro students, and do it all with a big and generous spirit which can infuse the whole of American society with the liberal values which make its free growth possible. A clear line of action is recommended: to educate the individual, wherever he may be; to give to each the kind and amount of education appropriate to his talents; to give to each an understanding of his culture and the present world; and to give to all a set of ideals toward which a better life and a better society can move.

There is no comparable statement of educational needs and intentions in any country in the world today, except for the British Education Act of 1944, which, in some ways, the present report resembles. There are, of course, as in the British case, huge problems ahead in trying to carry out the suggested program for America, and it is improbable that any Commission could give us the ways of solving them without first reorganizing considerable parts of the American economic system and the present government. It remains for each college and university, with whatever help it can get from the faculty, students, public, state, and the federal government, to create means to the extent of its own powers. The contribution which the Commission has made is to give us a social document of major significance, full of leading ideas, whose large virtues lie in its sweep, its moral energy, its philosophy of humanism and pluralism, and its mood of muscular idealism.

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A document with these virtues and composed in the manner of a Commission, reflects accurately the ideals, hopes, attitudes and intentions of the American people. Hidden beneath the language of the report, and sometimes obscured by turgid passages of educational prose, lie the philosophies of Jefferson, James, Dewey, Emerson and Lincoln, the hopes of immigrants, the beliefs of protestants, the optimism of pioneers, and the American faith that if we know enough and work hard enough, everything will come out all right. It is natural, therefore, that the basic recommendation made by the Commission should be to give free higher education to everyone who can show he has the ability, interest and need for it, and thus to give each individual a chance to move through a mobile society to the position he deserves in it.

This degree of faith in the power and value of higher education is in some quarters considered naïve, and there are a good many in America who are appalled by the prospect of such a radical expansion of free education in the colleges. Among them are those who honestly fear the dilution of educational quality by the attempt to do too much, and others who believe that there is not enough room in professional occupations for increased numbers of graduates. But among them are also those who believe that only certain elements in American life should have the benefit of higher education, and who believe that laws against unfair discrimination are anti-democratic, since they rob the privileged groups of the opportunity to deny their privileges to other groups. It is implied that to remove the present economic and racial barriers to talented students would unleash a horde of youth who would somehow violate the honor of the human intellect. Finally, among them are also those who divide mankind into leaders and followers, the former to be chosen, from amongst themselves, by those who have the power of dispensation in their hands.

This doctrine was summarized in a recent statement by Canon Bell, in these words: "The great majority of the human race is composed of those who were not born with minds that can be developed for such activity as this (the activity of leadership): from birth their synaptic connections have been too slow . . ."

Such a scandalous piece of psychology and social philosophy is, luckily for America's future, refuted by the reality of human nature.

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For it is an inescapable and happy fact that the world is overflowing with unused human energies and resources, waiting for the chance to grow and to be guided to usefulness and leadership. It is the obligation of the educator to seek out the talent, and by whatever means can be devised, to bring it up to its height. The Commission flatly assumes that the best place for an intelligent and interested boy or girl of eighteen years of age is in college, and calculates that there are twice as many who should be there as the number now enrolled. I believe that this is true, and that we should set ourselves to achieving that end; but, before we do so, we should raise a number of questions about the individuals who should be in college and about the colleges themselves.

The majority of students now in college are there because their employment opportunities are being improved, because the life is pleasant and has its own tradition, and because their families want them to be. The desire to become intellectually independent, socially useful, informed, mature, and sensitive to aesthetic values, or to become the ideal person which the Commission has in mind, is seldom an aim which the student consciously holds. It is the function of the educator to help the student to develop those qualities, whether or not he first comes to college to achieve them. Otherwise, we have the constant reflection in our institutions of the value patterns of the society in which they exist. These value patterns in America revolve around a hard core of competitive material aims which the student finds he can in part achieve by going to college. One central aim, consciously held by many students, is for self-betterment, or for the development of the individual self into a socially approved and inwardly rewarding person who can be assured of money and power in later life. Hence the elaborate rituals of the fraternity-sorority system, the concern for popularity, the effort to build a good college record composed of high grade points, many friends, many activities, and "good contacts." Other students have no declared personal aim in coming to college, other than to accept the normal pattern of behavior for their age-group. Such aims and practices, although unattractive, are not to be deplored as inherent philistinism or selfishness in young Americans, or to be used as evidence that many of our present and future students should not be in college. They compose

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a reality which must be recognized and used by the teacher as a means of drawing the individual from a student-centered involvement in his own interests and welfare into an attitude of social and intellectual concern. In this process of individual development lies our greatest hope for the moral and social improvement of American life. The colleges and universities are the only social institutions deliberately equipped to carry out that improvement. Therefore their work must be broadly and continually extended.

As I understand the Commission, it is saying: "Here are two million more of our youth through whom America can achieve a strong and free society in the future; they seem, by the rough measurements we have been able to apply, to have the ability and potential interest to carry out the leadership we need; if we improve elementary and high school education everywhere, we would find that there are thousands more boys and girls of talent who are now lost to the colleges; we must do everything we can to make their higher education possible and effective."

This does not, of course, ensure that there will actually be 4,600,000 students in colleges and universities by 1960. Already the passage of national legislation designed to train most of these same youth in the military virtues will prevent the accomplishment of the Commission's goal. Other social, personal and political factors, over which we have no direct control, may further distract our youth from going to college. Higher education can expand only as fast as the youth of the country realize that they need it, want it, and are willing to work at it—and only as fast as the value of higher education is accepted by America. Many of the able young men and women whom the Commission feels should be in college by 1960 may very well prefer to use their talents and energies in business and industry, and may feel that two or four years of general education are a handicap to success in those fields. The number of variables presently involved in the calculation of the future, either of education or of life, is at the moment too great to permit accuracy, by the Commission or by any other agency.

On the other hand, the notion of free education for all exists as an ideal, and the reality of our increasing enrollment will remain. In order to meet the real and to encourage the ideal, the Commission

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strongly recommends that a program of adult education be established in every existing college, that a large number of small colleges be established throughout the country, and that more than half of the increased number of students be accommodated in two-year programs of general education in community colleges. This, it seems to me, would introduce a number of desirable reforms. It would, first of all, break the grip which the graduate school now has on undergraduate education, and allow freedom of reform in the liberal arts curriculum. It would help to defeat the dangerous trend toward bigness in all our colleges and universities.

The mechanical organization of present liberal studies in our large universities is not reaching the aim which liberal education sets, which is to develop in each individual a cluster of liberal values. The average student in college today is educated anonymously by distant professors and standard textbooks. He appears several times a week in the company of two hundred to fifteen hundred others, and sits his way to graduation, pausing in his note-taking and underlining twice or more each term to make the series of correct grunts which comprise the usual objective examination. The human beings involved in this clutter of mimeographed sheets have lost their identity.

The situation is due only in part to the severe overcrowding. It is due, rather, to a dominant conception on the part of those who administer and plan the universities, as to how higher education should be conducted. The conveyance of subject matter by mechanical means was the standard pattern of arrangement before the present overcrowding began. I suspect that if adequate funds were to become available to universities tomorrow, most of the money would be spent on buildings, printing, equipment and devices, with a small percentage of the budget devoted to plans for educating new teachers and for bringing more and better paid faculty members into the academies.

Unless we spend our money and effort on forming communities of scholars who are interested in teaching, and unless those communities are small enough or informal enough in organization to allow free exchange of opinion and knowledge amongst students and teachers, there is little hope that we can develop a genuinely liberal education. We must make the life of the college student an immer-

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sion in a total environment of learning, where the companionship of the scholar, the athlete, the wit and the artist are sought naturally and eagerly at various times and according to various needs.

I believe it is this ideal environment of learning which the Commission has in mind when it repeatedly emphasizes the need for an organic philosophy of education, and the need for following the logic of that philosophy in making the college into a genuine community. In such a community, it would be natural to compose music, to write stories, to perform experiments, to discuss politics, to play games, to learn facts, to govern oneself, and to act cooperatively in the collective government of the whole. The Commission has remarked upon the splintering of human knowledge into little courses for specialists or dilettantes, the separation of the intellectual from the personal and emotional life of the student, and the consequent failure of the elective system to give us a community of values, ideas and attitudes which all students can share and which can serve to sustain the spiritual and cultural life of America. It agrees with Whitehead and Jaspers that the unity by which knowledge may be made whole lies, not in a standard curriculum of general education, but in a consistency of aim to which the entire college is devoted, and by reference to which, each course in the curriculum may be reformed. In an earlier time, the aim was to develop a Christian gentleman. Now that life is less of a gentleman's game, and Christianity, in order to be morally effective has become more secular, the aim of liberal education has shifted to that of developing, in the Commission's words, a "more abundant life and a stronger, freer social order."

In order that knowledge should serve these ends, the Commission asserts, it must now be related to the student and to the demands of contemporary society. It must deal with personal, spiritual and social questions which concern life in the present and in the future. Some of these are the eternal questions of human destiny, freedom and the nature of life. They are eternal because they have appeared at each stage of the recurring present during the past centuries of Eastern and Western civilization. They have been answered in a variety of ways, by religious thinkers, poets, scientists, philosophers, novelists and workers. The answers have formed the germ cells around which our social institutions have grown, and by which our personal values

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have been established. We thus have our religions, our governments, our schools, our moralities, our industries and our universes. Since no one of the answers is absolute and complete, it is the responsibility of the scholar and of the student constantly to raise the great questions in the urgency of their present social and personal setting, and by the study and valuing of ideals and realities, by the careful and attentive consideration of the answers others in past and present time have given, to make our own knowledge and values as best we can.

If we who are already in the colleges, undertake such an enterprise with enthusiasm, the revival of learning and of teaching for which the Commission hopes and pleads will take place. The secret lies in the people who teach, and how they affect the people who learn. At the moment, there are tragically few sensitive, wise and generous individuals who are able and willing to teach our college youth, nor can we expect to find enough of them for some years to come.

However, the number of teachers will steadily increase, and the quality of teaching will improve, when faculty and students are given a chance to speculate, to enjoy, to act, and to live independently, in a community devoted to freeing the mind and inventing new knowledge. This means a radical increase in the salary of the teacher, radical increase in the freedom of faculty democracy, and a radical increase in the responsibility given to students for their own education. Our problems also will increase radically, and in some cases there may be no good solution which will satisfy the ideal. In the meantime, the Commission has taken the first steps toward making the huge enterprise possible. It remains for federal support, to the extent of $4,000,000,000, to set it in motion. But that is a matter about which discussion is just beginning.

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The Social Role of Education

Gordon Keith Chalmers

THE President's Commission on Higher Education faced a very difficult task. It was asked by President Truman to think of the long-range problems of the higher learning "in terms of its objectives, methods and facilities; and in the light of the social role it has to play." It thus faced a twofold problem: the social function, *in popular terms*, of our university system, a problem related in the departments of the national government to old-age pensions and unemployment insurance; and the social function *in intellectual terms*. By considering the popular problem first, the Commission failed to observe the intellectual one, and in consequence even its recommendations on the popular front are of questionable value.

Through all our history we have been extravagant—with forests, soil and iron; with work, energy and our feelings. In education our extravagance has taken the form of being able to afford inaccuracy, sentiment and widespread pretense—a pretense so magnificent that in one of the squabbles over the inflation of the bachelor's degree Barrett Wendell proposed that all infants be declared bachelors of arts at birth. Our chief wastage lies in the substitution of feeling for ideas, our concern for "attitudes" and neglect of critical thought, our flattery of the romantic elements of youth, and our preference for a picnic of pleasant and ephemeral feeling over the riches of the mind. All this would be inconsiderable in the world, were it not that in material affairs we have very hard common sense. Our precision in dealing with matter, and our success in exploiting it, has invited unwelcome obligations which are really moral and intellectual.

Contentment with half-analyzed facts about human life and experience, coupled with an inaccurate and irresponsible account of

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the deepest affairs of men's allegiance, has been in the past a little regrettable and a little amusing and largely innocuous. It has not even mattered much to the world that slipshod pretense at thinking has been favored by schools and universities. We have been rich and secure and could afford sentimentality. But no longer. We now must lead the world and play a major part in governing it.

What an opportunity faced the Commission! It was charged by the President of the United States to examine "the functions of higher education in our democracy and the means by which they can best be performed." Unfortunately the Commission did not seize the chance to examine the objectives; instead it projected the old sentimentality into a plan for multiplying the weaknesses of the institutions we have.

The principal recommendations of the Commission are: federal aid to higher education; expansion of universities; establishment of community colleges; expansion of international education; adoption of "general education"; elimination of discriminatory practices by law; and extension of adult education. In support of these proposals, the Commission marshaled a great many statistics. Some statisticians quarrel with the Commission's figures; this essay will concern itself with the opinions behind the statistics.

The Commission is of the opinion that the existing standards of admission to college are high enough and still, despite the relaxation of recent years, too specific. Entrance standards are put by the Commission into the category of discriminatory practices and are treated as anti-democratic. The Commission deplores emphasis on "verbal skills" and "intellectual interests." With respect to the level of aptitude, the Commission holds that young people above the 6th percentile of college students taking the American Council on Education aptitude test are capable of doing two years of college work, and those above the 20th, of completing four years. Young people of such meager promise do in fact complete two and four years in some institutions now, but when one reflects that in the opinion of able teachers they are not equal to university work, that they are declared eligible for college by law rather than by any accomplishment of their own, and that the reason why they are graduated from the university is at bottom a political rather than an educational one, he

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sees why it is that the real standard of ability necessary to do respectable college work is in fact very much higher. At the best colleges and universities, the minimum aptitude necessary to hold on with bottom grades ranges on the same test from the 50th to the 75th percentile. Let us remember that with the extensive authority of a presidential commission the report becomes in a small way a popular definition of the university. Evidently we are to think it is a low-grade enterprise in terms of the intellect—in order that we may be told that universities must be expanded.

The Commission proposes to substitute "general education" for liberal education. There are now current two definitions of general education, each designed to describe a reform recommended within a great university. The University of Minnesota, quite sensibly concerned with the presence of numerous young people of small promise or ambition or interest, or all three, who by law could not be removed from the company of promising and serious scholars, developed general education for them. This is something interesting for them to do. It includes many lectures about society, and offers, according to the catalogue, a course in the recreational facilities of the community. The general college at Minnesota has proved useful, and besides solving a political problem for the university, it provides some intellectual stimulus to its members. So at Minnesota general education is something which can profitably be told to those who initially are not interested in learning. At Harvard the term has a different connotation. It means the common education thought by the Harvard Committee on General Education in a Free Society to be necessary to all thoughtful men, whatever their ultimate specialty. The President's Commission has chosen the Minnesota definition, but unlike that distinguished university, has proposed it as the norm for all undergraduates.

General education, according to the Commission, should redefine "liberal education in terms of life's problems as men face them, to give it human orientation and social direction, to invest it with content that is directly relevant to the demands of contemporary society." To this end the Commission is concerned with social action and attitudes. It favors the contemporary world and relevance, not pausing to ask whether the contemporary world is in fact asking the relevant ques-

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tions. It proposes that study should "emphasize generalizations," rather than facts and the rigorous thinking by which generalizations are made. In commenting on this, Dean ten Hoor said that to teach by generalization is the way to authoritarianism. The Commission reiterates its disapproval of the view that some subjects are more nearly central than others; it prefers the student's own tastes at the moment of being a student to the critical judgment of mankind concerning the intellectual usefulness of the various disciplines. "The student and his rounded development will be at the center of instructional activities, and subject matter at the periphery." At Kenyon College we hold the reverse to be true: that a young man makes a step toward becoming rounded and developed if for the time being he forgets himself in the beginning of the mastery of a few of the central disciplines of the mind.

The preference of the Commission for a popular and unexacting idea of general education indicates its limited view of the "social role" of universities. I do not suggest that there is no social usefulness in the low-level popular education recommended. The National Youth Administration college program, for example, was regarded by many as a device to keep the young off the streets in a period of mass unemployment, and if in truth this was its only effect, it had a real if limited value. A similar usefulness of education is found by many in the fact that enrollment of tax-supported universities goes up when there is unemployment. Another real but limited social gain is envisaged in the Commission's recommendation that greater masses of young people be lectured at to improve their attitude toward UNESCO and the United Nations. This proposal has the practical sound of telling people under excellent auspices what they ought to think.

The concern of the Commission for adult education is laudable; so is its indignation at discrimination against Americans because of race or creed. It proposes to abolish segregation and other types of discrimination by law, but whether legislation will here achieve the desired result is problematical.

The question of federal aid similarly involves politics in the widest sense of the term. Federal aid cannot be so managed that it will avoid all standard-setting in Washington. The Commission itself

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proposes one such standard—that the institutions to receive aid satisfy Washington in the matter of discrimination. The real leadership in higher education today comes from scores of universities and colleges, but economists say that inflation and taxes are rapidly shifting educational power to the state capitols. We lose something by this; it will be forty-eight times worse if the power is shifted to Washington. In recent months we have seen two important reports on education by advisory commissions composed of prominent citizens, the one appointed by the governor of New York (the Young Commission) and the other by the President of the United States. The fact that the report for New York was practical, down-to-earth, and has already guided legislation in Albany, while the report for the nation is full of questionable generalizations, suggests the greater reliability of a job done at home for the home folks. Except in circumscribed and specific fields—such as the scientific development of defense and resources—I question if our national government is sufficiently centralized to handle the intricate problems of the higher learning. Undoubtedly education in the poorer states needs federal financial help. For the wealthy states, perhaps the advice they need from a presidential commission is to raise and spend their educational money at home.

But the chief weakness of the Commission's report is its failure to grasp the nature and importance of high standards. Dr. R. G. D. Richardson, the mathematician, said, "If I had to give a title to some sections of the first volume, I would call them *The Apotheosis of Mediocrity*." The social reason why university education should be truly "higher" could be illustrated in religion or morals. Here is an example from politics. In 1930, when American intellectuals saw in Russia a utopia on earth, I heard a learned humanist say, "Our chief interest in Russia should be that she is a potential military power." How bizarre his opinion seemed to the academic world of the time! Notice that he did not condemn Russia; he spoke of what Americans ought to be thinking about. In the mind of the scholar who made the remark, a deep and accurate familiarity with history, philosophy, letters and religion contributed to the judgment. It represents the kind of reasoning which we have a right to expect of higher education when we consider its social role. The detachment,

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the precise and wide knowledge, the acumen, and the intellectual boldness which prompted that remark in a time when fad demanded a different "attitude" toward Russia is the kind of thing which a university can seek out, prize and cultivate.

The President's Commission might have started its analysis of the means by which the functions of higher education in our democracy can best be performed by quoting Admiral Nimitz' famous letter on arithmetic. He wrote it at the beginning of the war, when our steel mills and automobile factories had proved adequate to mobilization. Our schools, in spite of gigantic enrollments and impressive plants, proved inadequate. A deplorable proportion of otherwise qualified candidates for officer training in the Navy could not do fractions. The Army and Navy observed something similar about the inability to express a slightly complex idea with simplicity and speed, and the Commission might have used the report on reading and writing prepared by the School and College Conference. When the Army foresaw the need for many interpreters in the European theater, it discovered how badly we teach languages in America. Facts concerning this, and how best to meet reasonable objectives for American schools and universities, have been studied by some of the ablest teachers in the country, and the reports might make a useful beginning in a re-examination of "the adequacy of curricula, particularly in the field of international affairs and social understanding."

If a study of objectives, functions, methods and facilities had begun in some such fashion as this, it would no doubt have led on to the social and political problems considered by the President's Commission, but the temper and the standard of the study would have been different from the one which was made. The wastage of the talented which the Commission records would have come under review. Many of the best, though perhaps not so many as the Commission states, do not attend college for lack of money. If the Commission had recommended devices whereby an equal number of the least promising be put out to make room for the more promising, it would have dealt realistically with our limited resources of trained men and women to do the teaching. President Truman expressed concern in his appointing letter for all able young people. In the opinion of many scientists and scholars the net result of the Commission's recommen-

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dations would be to reduce the opportunity for the able by further cluttering up the academic world with incompetents. According to a committee of the Association of American Colleges, "a student has the right to as good an education as he can be given and as he is capable of receiving; anything less than that is not only undemocratic but dangerous to the whole concept of higher education and intelligent citizenship."

The extravagance of the educational system in the United States appears when we spend money and talent for half-instruction; when we present something to young people which they do not quite learn; when we let students avoid the hard work of writing essays and solving problems which require their own original use of mathematics, language and ideas; when we let ourselves avoid the expensive chore of marking essay examination questions; in short, when for whatever reason we accept substitutes for good performance by the student. A small indication of the extravagance has been seen at each of the School and College Conferences held at Kenyon. After two days of mutual discussion by superintendents, principals and members of the Kenyon and other faculties, a group of college seniors and juniors meets with the school officials; no faculty members are present. The students usually ask most of the questions. An inevitable one, addressed to the heads of some of the best high schools in the territory, is: "Why did you waste our time?"

We could afford that wastage before as a nation we assumed world obligations. At the center of the problem of the social role of schools and colleges lies the question whether we can afford it still. Our country seems to have accepted the fact that world leadership entails military and financial outlay. Will the academic world wake up to the fact that it means intellectual strenuousness as well? I do not refer simply to political and social information about the world. I refer to what it takes to govern. To espouse democratic government demands intellectual and moral sinew as well as armies and good feeling.

Britain and America have followed opposite theories in the development of education: they to refine and intensify, confining the opportunity to a few; we to broaden the opportunity. For our several tasks in the world these two courses were doubtless wise. If we agree,

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however, that many of the British tasks in the world have now fallen to us, we could with profit observe British education. In order to remain a democracy and still to guarantee the freedom of the seas, the British found it necessary to do a rigorous—some would say a too-rigorous—job of keeping school. Surely we shall exert world leadership in our own and not the British way, but if we, with their help, are to succeed where in the past we all failed, it will be partly by virtue of trained intellect.

In Britain the prewar university population was around 60,000, and a national commission recommended that by the 1950's it go up to 100,000. More recently, the 100,000 figure was revised to below 90,000, *lest the quality of a university education be depressed!* In Ohio, with a fraction of Britain's population, the university enrollment is now over 100,000. Britain is not America, but surely the British experience means something to us. One thing it means is that if we are to analyze well the problems of Orient, Near East, the American continents, and the islands of the sea, we need to refine and enrich our human knowledge—all the knowledge which we convey to ourselves in words, and the related knowledge conveyed by numbers. Thus in intellectual terms the social role of higher education would involve first of all the best achievable mastery of the humane knowledge necessary for liberal and democratic government at home and abroad.

This should stand at the center of the objectives of higher education; every device and plan, for the schools as well as the universities, should be made in the light of it. The other half of the social role of schools refers to mass education in political and social matters, and this remains a gigantic problem. The professional educators long ago decided that the way to deal with it was by developing "attitudes" rather than by coping with the hard job of increasing the number who can read critically. The President's Commission reflects the view popular among professional educators. Suppose instead that the social objective for popular education were to bring a large number of people to the point where they can read accurately the editorials of the day. If this could be done on a fairly mature level by a substantial proportion of high-school graduates, one could abandon the dangerous business of "attitudes," for he would have provided peo-

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ple with a means whereby they could form judgments of their own. This would be a democratic move in education, similar to that in Scotland and the Scandinavian countries. Then in truth the social role of education would be fulfilled in popular terms.

If this is to be done, secondary education needs money, and it is here that attention must be focused. Suppose we should build up truly excellent secondary schools with adequately paid and sufficiently large staffs. Higher education would benefit. Suppose also that national scholarships were available in competition for the most talented and accomplished, and that the thousands of these not now in college for financial reasons should crowd out of the seats of the higher learning those lacking intellectual and verbal skill—crowd them into types of training more suited to their talents. This would indeed be higher education for American democracy.

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Four Songs of the Italian Earth

Sir Osbert Sitwell

I

Spring Morning

Not so fine,
But warm, oh warm
With an early smell of straw, of orris and of roses.

Listening clouds of sleep
Hang upon towers
As roses cling to walls,
Press the glistening flowers
Into the warm, damp earth again.

The little pigs squeal among the trodden straw,
The strawberries are sodden.
Under the eaves in the sweet, invisible rain
The birds chirp and gurgle in the gutters.

"Is it fog that nuzzles my hand?"
The old man mutters.
"Damp and white is the fur of the old hunting-dog,
White and damp as fog,
His coat smells of wet, but also of days that were good,
When I was not stiff as wood in each bone
And he slept less in the sun of an afternoon."

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II

Summer

Sun dissolves to recreate.
Brick smoulders,
Plaster moulders
In the sun.

On the riven ground
The sweat of my labour falls all day like the rain.
Each night I die,
And in the morn am born again.

No time for my gun!
Yet I wipe my hair back from my forehead,
Look round me.
Not a bird in sight!
Flowers blow: mountains show:
Fruit and sky grow and glow.

What is the day's beat?
In the summer's husks?
Men calling in the fields,
Wheels creaking through the buzz and hum of summer.
But at night, in the heart of the heat,
The sounds are different,
Whether dry or glutinous;
The rhythmical, high shuffle of the cicada among the grasses,
The cool, cold-blooded cry of hunting owls
That float and flap luminously in the darkness
And over all, that primal chant of earth,
The frogs, within their thick, and mottled skins,
Croaking their common sense, croaking
In patches of warm wet darkness,
Lost in the universe;
Voices that only die when the chant of the priest begins,
After the day's first burst of tumbling, grumbling bells.

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III

Autumn

The moth hums under the beams
In the darkened room,
Cool in their darkness, enclosed in autumn's glow
As the stone of the peach is bitter within sweet flesh.

The moth hums and hovers under the rafters.
And below, men sing as they swing the oar of the wine press,
Till the sharp juice spurts on the pavement and dyes it,
And the acrid scent sours the air,
Crisp and blue with the smoke of bonfires.

Now my dog whines to be out,
And we go with my gun,
Walking stiffly into the light of the evening,
the light of the mountains,
Into the very eye of the sun,
Until as I hide, to aim,
The cypress and I grow one.

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IV

Winter

Rime lies crisp upon the ground,
But not in the great marshes.
There, the angry snout of the boar
Brushes aside the rushes.

In villages, tilted upon hills,
The swarthy, innocent-faced shepherds
Squeal on their wooden trumpets,
Squeak on their bagpipes,
Before the gold-haloed Virgin.

On the hills, under flat-topped pines,
The flames that were lit by the resting huntsmen,
Die like stars in a moment's sunshine,
And leave a glistening ring upon the earth.

⊙SIR OSBERT SITWELL is a well-known British writer. His latest volume of autobiography, *Laughter in the Next Room*, was published recently. Sir Osbert and his sister, Edith, are now visiting the United States for their first lecture tour in this country.

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Alcohol and American Recreational Life

Herbert A. Bloch

IN ANY analysis of alcoholism in America, the roseate days of the Prohibition Era and the lusty, roaring twenties must be regarded as significant and interesting symptoms. Certainly, it would appear to be obvious that America's present-day drinking habits are not the result of the prohibition fiasco and the era of the "speakeasy" (although these have undoubtedly contributed their share to the intensified drinking pattern which is characteristic of our own day), but are deeply rooted in the entire complex of American culture and civilization. More recently, the growth of the problem and the contemporary focus of interest in alcoholism have assumed some significant new dimensions.

In the first place, through the enlivened interest of the universities and such groups as Alcoholics Anonymous, we are becoming aware of the enormous number of genial imbibers, euphemistically called by the categorically minded researcher the "social drinkers." By skillfully devised propaganda and through an aroused public interest, excursions and alarums are being raised because of the continual potential yield of excessive pathological drinkers which the large number of "social drinkers" are presumably producing.

Of equal interest, and designed to shock the American mentality to even greater depression, is the current emphasis upon such pathological drinkers as representing symptomatic disorders of a psychotic or psychoneurotic type. Gone are the pleasantly convivial shades of the swinging barroom door. Where, oh where, are the importunate and soul-rendering pleas of little Nell, the drunkard's delight, whose

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timorous refrain, so plaintively intoned, "Father, dear father, come home to us now," moved an entire generation? In short, no longer does John Barleycorn constitute a moral problem, a reprehensible degenerate and an object of scorn or pity to the good ladies of the Temperance Union. Instead, he is now a sick man—a mighty sick man. The celebrated target of the pulpits now becomes a matter of scientific concern and analytical vivisection to the psychiatrist, the sociologist, the physiologist and the medical profession. He now enjoys moral impunity, but no longer scientific disinterest and detachment. "Father, dear father," of Victorian sentiment and bathos, has found a haven in the Yale Laboratory of Applied Physiology. His metamorphosis has been similar to the belated respectability accorded other social problems and diseases, such as syphilis and gonorrhea, which, lifted from the previous perspective of moral opprobrium, now fall within the province of a scientifically enlightened interest. This transition from moral dubiety to a sociologically rooted problem has been fashioned by the growth of the scientific attitude and the general impersonality induced by a highly mobile and urbanized civilization.

Once the problem is changed from its constraining moral dimensions to a problem of the laboratory, it undergoes a corresponding transition in mass education, public enlightenment and propagandist disclosure. Thus, we are informed that the problem must be appraised in relation to sundry other evils, largely physical in origin, which have beset mankind for many centuries. In fact, we are fortified with the dubious consolation that not only are we without sin, but that, according to the interesting logic of Alcoholics Anonymous, even the innocent may be unwitting victims. It is interesting to note the propaganda emphasis made by such groups as Alcoholics Anonymous, who not only maintain, and possibly rightly so, that alcoholism represents a special and unique type of psychosis, but who aver, as well, that many of those who never take a drink may, nevertheless, be classified as "alcoholics." This may appear to constitute the ultimate in some new kind of sociological *reductio ad absurdum.* Here we have the classic echo of Calvinistic thunder on the left. According to this dogma, they may also be damned who just stand and wait, putting us in mind of Dr. Fell's ancient paradox.

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Once having assumed the dignity of an honored place in the vital statistics of the nation, the public attitude assumes a novel orientation. According to the estimates made by the Yale University Laboratory of Applied Physiology and the disclosures of the Alcoholics Anonymous group, there are at least 44 million social drinkers in the United States, and possibly as many as 50 million—figures, incidentally, which provide us with a comfortable margin of choice and which would be extremely difficult to confirm. Of this number, it is further presumed that 3 million may be classified as alcoholics, i.e., those for whom drinking constitutes an indispensable part of daily living. Of this latter group, it is further estimated that no less than one-quarter (750,000) may be regarded as confirmed alcoholics, constituting a serious public health problem. This latter group is comprised of those whose excessive drinking, as cause or result, produces various types of psychopathological disorders sufficiently serious to require concerted and prolonged medical and therapeutic care. The dimensions of the problem may be further confirmed in the view suggested by its comparison with traditional public health problems such as cancer, which numbers approximately 500,000 active patients, and tuberculosis, which still claims about 700,000 victims.

However, aside from the claims made by the groups mentioned above, the fact that Americans drink both uniquely and excessively can be clearly shown. American drinking habits, incorporated within an entire complex of customs, attitudes, beliefs and values which we may call the American drinking pattern, contain elements peculiar to American culture, reflecting specifically characteristic traits in the broader pattern of American recreation. Traditionally, in European cultures, aside from past dietetic necessity, drinking has been a phase of deeply rooted, stable and integrated social and recreational patterns. Among Europeans, drinking may remain a satisfying social practice rather than a vice or social problem, largely because it remains an element within otherwise integrated and participating recreational practices. To separate drinking from the well-established social and recreational procedures of which it has traditionally been a part, and to focus attention upon it as an isolated element apart from the social amenities of group recreation, renders it a problem and not a spontaneous social art. With Europeans, for example, drinking has tradi-

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tionally been a phase of the occasion of the group's coming together; with Americans, conversely, coming together has all too frequently provided the occasion for drinking. In that distinction, and its historical evolution, appears to lie one of the salient factors in the more disturbing features of our drinking habits.

But do Americans actually drink differently, and if so, in what respects are their drinking habits unique and distinct? There are various types of evidence which may be produced to indicate rather specifically that Americans *do* drink differently from other people, and with far greater intensity and zeal. Such evidence, which we are shortly to examine, does not only corroborate what is largely well known, but serves as a symptom of the profoundly disturbed patterns characteristic of American use of leisure and the peculiar American penchant for "having a good time."

To appraise this problem adequately requires careful examination of two kinds of indices or symptomatic data. In the first place, it is illuminating to observe the peculiarly distinctive physical manifestations of the problem, distinguishing these from institutional drinking patterns elsewhere, which reveal themselves in such memorabilia as the volume and the types of consumption of alcoholic beverages in this country, and those specific problems of social disorder, such as public drunkenness and disorderly conduct, which are disclosed by our police records.

But perhaps of even greater importance, as a testimonial to the distorted relationship existing between excessive drinking and the peculiar American ideology concerning recreation, are the characteristic drinking customs of Homo Americanus, in the relative absence of socially considered restraint (the salubrious folk sanctions and disapprovals marking group customs elsewhere being conspicuously absent), and the distinguishing temper of American convivial occasions and drinking bouts. Further enlightening are the typically American attitudes toward mixed drinking on different class levels, which suggest rather lucidly the emotional and psychological atmosphere in which the average American pursues his frenzied bent toward leisure-time activity.

Relative to the first class of symptoms suggested, it is of some significance to note that the per capita consumption of alcoholic bev-

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erages in this country appears to have risen steadily since the end of the last century. By 1910, the per capita consumption in liters of absolute alcohol was claimed to have risen already to 6.89 as compared with an index of 4.30 for the period 1880-1890. According to published estimates of the Department of Commerce, as reported by Benson Y. Landis, the total amount spent for alcoholic beverages by the people of the United States in 1940 was $3,595,000,000; that for 1934, $2,003,000,000; and for 1943, $6,083,000,000. Keeping in mind the fact that "during the same period the national income increased rapidly" (as did the rate of taxation), Landis further reports that "these . . . expenditures . . . have apparently been equal to between 4 and 5 per cent of the total income of all the people in the years 1934-43. In 1940, the estimated expenditure for alcoholic beverages was slightly less than 5 per cent of the total income of all the people from all sources. For the [entire population] the expenditure . . . was the equivalent of about 27 dollars plus, per capita. For the approximately 44 million users of alcoholic beverages, it was an average of about 81 dollars per person."

It can be argued, of course, that any increase in per capita consumption represents a general increase in normative consumers' standards of living, but even accepting this, the fundamental implication of such an increase is not necessarily challenged. Conditions which promote the consumption of alcoholic beverages elsewhere, such as conditions arising out of dietary needs or traditional mealtime imbibing, have never presented themselves as extended practices in American life. Americans may have taken to drink because they were unhappy, or for countless other reasons, but rarely because their diet necessitated it.

Likewise testifying to the particularism of American drinking habits is the relatively high percentage of beverages of concentrated alcoholic content, whiskey and gin, for example, consumed in vast quantities as contrasted with less potent liquors, such as beer and wines. Americans have long been known as drinkers of the so-called "hard liquors," in striking contrast to the regularized, daily mealtime drinking of many Europeans who consume primarily beers and wines.

Consider for example the cocktail, peculiarly an American concoc-

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tion, developed apparently to make palatable drinks which ordinarily might not be considered potable. This use of adulterants has itself initiated a series of practices, both in relation to the type of drinks served and that peculiar American efflorescence known as the "cocktail party," which Americans, by dint of exuberance and social contagion, have given to the world as a distinct cultural contribution. Significant to note in this respect are the class and status characteristics of such occasions, relating them rather specifically to certain forms of middle-class and upper middle-class society.

In token of this peculiar American drinking contribution may be found the ubiquitous American Cocktail Bar, in habitats remote from its origins, ranging from London's Soho to the Place de la Concorde, and from Shepherd's Hotel in Egypt to Singapore and the Shanghai Bund. This extensive consumption practice, employing as its base relatively inexpensive and low-grade gins, is relished in the spirit of the time-honored American vernacularism, because "it gets you there quicker."

Reflecting upon American drinking as both a major and minor social irritant is the persistence in annual police reports of the high percentage of arrests for public drunkenness and the minor related offense of disorderly conduct. Within the last two decades, in the state of Massachusetts, for example, a sample year indicates that out of a total of 187,560 arrests, 93,151—or almost one-half—were on charges of drunkenness. Samples of several states indicate ranges of anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent for similar classifications of offenses. Such figures would very likely be even higher if minor disorders of this type in rural areas were adequately reported.

Psychological manifestations of American drinking are even more pertinent in revealing the peculiarities of the American recreational temperament. Recognizing that American drinking practices differ in relation to differing social, educational, cultural and economic levels, a common pattern may nonetheless be detected. American speed of drinking and timing provide a case in point. Among the French, for example, it is not uncommon that the amount of liquor consumed during the course of an ordinary evening's entertainment is relatively small, typified perhaps by the French boulevardier who sits all evening at his sidewalk café with his solitary glass of apéritif

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before him. Americans at a drinking bout are much more apt to consume as much alcoholic fluid as can be expeditiously managed within the shortest time possible. The whole undertaking is approached in the spirit of attaining that pleasant state of aftermath or euphoria with as great celerity as possible, as manifested in the peculiar American folkway of enjoining the late-comer to "catch up." Similarly revealing of the culture-mentality are the pleasantries and blandishments accompanying such drinking occasions, stereotyped in humor and actuality by such sallies as "Here's mud in your eye!" "Down the hatch!" or that effete consolation, "Here's to the dog that bit you!" The marked intensity of such occasions and the zealousness with which such activities are pursued, characterized by a remarkable absence of well-integrated recreational and cultural forms, not only distinguishes such behavior from behavior elsewhere, but is germane to the entire American recreational outlook as well.

Associated with the manner in which Americans drink is the related problem of drinking between the sexes. Anthropologists have long pointed to the fact that the nature of ritual, ceremonial and recreation, among both primitive and modern cultures, is reflected in the degree to which women, children and the several age-groupings of a society are permitted to participate in the social practice itself. Whether women are excluded or admitted into such social practices not only gives meaning and relevance to the social pattern itself, but ofttimes will cogently express deeply-entrenched and venerated social values.

It is significant to note, therefore, that drinking between the sexes is a relatively belated development in American social evolution. The ethos of America's rural and paternalistic past until recently rigorously restricted such practices and, in fact, relegated drinking among women, except under carefully stipulated conditions, to women of doubtful moral stature. The rather genteel practice of maintaining bars and saloons as exclusive male sanctuaries, with private side entrances for women euphemistically referred to as "family entrances," until recently rather delicately conveyed the public temper. To find women standing at a bar, enjoying what was considered essentially a male prerogative, was not only unusual but rigidly proscribed by

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ordinance in many areas of the United States until well into the second decade of the present century.

The general tone, character and underlying conception of drinking as a recreational practice has been almost wholly masculine-dominated in American life. Thus, the innovation of giving access to women to precincts heretofore regarded exclusively as the province of the male animal, abetted by the omnipresent cocktail lounge, constitutes nothing short of a phenomenal revolution in domestic social patterns. That this development is presently producing a new problem in American life may be seen in the ominous recent rise of the number of female patients admitted to mental hospitals for alcoholism, an increase from 6.3 to 17.3 per cent during a period of a little more than a decade, according to the psychiatrist, Robert V. Seliger. Vanished in the limbo of Victorian propriety is the classic retirement of the men, upon the occasion of the formal dinner party, to a secluded section of the home for liquor, cigars and the lusty, albeit overworked, stories of the farmer's daughter. This custom has been supplanted by a free commingling of the sexes in repartee and bibulousness upon such occasions.

An interesting aspect in the development of this joint drinking of the sexes may hereby be revealed. In Europe, such joint drinking of the sexes *preceded* the so-called liberation of women. As an intimate phase of family life, such drinking frequently served to curb excesses. In America, on the other hand, the intensified, organized drive toward the liberation of women, gaining momentum during the latter decades of the past century, *antedated* by far masculine tolerance toward the woman's right to drink, and, above all, masculine willingness to accept her as a drinking partner. As a typical American paradox, it is ironic to note that the emancipation of women in this country gained its chief impetus from those very feminine groups whose original, essential purpose was to outlaw liquor.

Probably nowhere better than in the trends of modern advertising can be seen American reluctance to accept women as the full equal drinking partners of men. The modern advertiser, that most zealous guardian of our *lares* and *penates*, exercises extreme circumspection concerning the possibility of offending the public's sensibilities and

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delicacies. While always discreetly recognizing the existence of a real trend, the greatest delicacy is maintained to prevent affronting public taste. Thus, only by implication, innuendo, or more insidious means, will the advertiser direct public attention toward what it seemingly publicly refutes. For example, the reluctance of advertisers to depict on their placards and billboards portrayals of women smoking, even after it was a widely recognized custom, is well known. While women pictorialized as wholesome and respectable may now adorn our advertisements for certain kinds of liquor, it is rare that they are depicted as actually in the drinking act itself. What is brought to mind is the recent picture adorning the billboards on our national highways, of the comfortable-appearing housewife, past middle age, sitting serenely on her sunlit porch and gazing longingly at a tantalizingly cold glass of beer. When the mores have run their course in the recognition of a *fait accompli*, the lady will have her glass of beer, if the advertisers run true to form.

This reflected prurience on the part of the advertiser is even more striking in the face of his readiness to portray flamboyantly other more disturbing phases of social relations. Such apparent willingness to titillate the American public with the most aphrodisiac and erotic displays wins public acclaim in the amazingly frank portrayals of perfume advertisements, advertisements revealing the most intimate details of a woman's toilet and lingerie, as well as the brazen exposure of the female form in the deeply-cleft costumes of the recent historical novels. In connection with the latter, as one advertising pundit has put it, such advertising marks the forward advance not of the best seller, but of the breast seller.

It appears likely, on the basis of what has already been said, that European drinking, closely constrained by habits of traditional mealtime, family and mixed drinking, stems to a considerable degree from a folk culture which was predominantly rural and homogeneous. Europeans, as we, have never forgotten the traditional folk sanction of group drinking, and both peoples have developed intense antagonisms toward solitary drinking. The solitary drinker has always been regarded with profound and disturbing suspicion as a dangerous drinker, and whereas, originally, the basis may have been in the customary association with drinking as a group rite, by extension, we

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now find psychiatric and medical grounds for stringent disapproval of such a practice. The enormous growth of urbanism in this country since the middle of the last century, exceeded only by the development in England, has promoted still further the impersonal character of drinking, and has de-personalized convivial functions and occasions.

Leisure-time values in any culture reflect the underlying values of the ethos of that culture, while these in turn reflect the basic clash and strain of the major institutions and social values striving for social supremacy. Or, put in another way, the underlying character of the culture, as reflected in the need for power, the need for self-aggrandizement, the need for wealth or the need for exploitation, permeates those activities which are sought as recreational activities in themselves. Ruth Benedict and other anthropologists have illustrated the pervasive social amalgam which holds such cultures together in the recognized concept of "patterns of culture." To cite but one illustration of how this process functions in American recreational life, we need only refer to the American craving for changeful experience, a fact induced by the highly mobile and changeful nature of American culture itself. Thus, the necessary conditions of American cultural life make change and continual frenzied readaptation essential, creating thereby among Americans habit patterns congenial to change. In examining the frenetic and ebullient recreational values which characterize Americans' leisure, such underlying values must continually be sought.

If the American culture pattern is examined from this perspective, we see delineated the anarchic impact of contradictory social and economic forces which have produced those secondary values of the ethos described above, which harass and impel Americans in their recreational habits. Out of the nineteenth-century maelstrom of a diversity of cultural backgrounds, the Puritan-Calvinistic negations of the New England hierarchy, the unprecedented population growth and development of urbanism, with the titanic spread of commerce and industry on an unheralded scale, have been created habit-patterns just as zealously pursued by Americans in leisure as they are in the marketplace. Such unintegrated recreational patterns, reflecting the contradictions in American life itself, have stultified the bodily and psychological self-invigoration which occurs in the

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orderly expression of that "spontaneity and freedom" to which Erich Fromm refers in his recent works on neurosis and modern society.

The fundamental values of the ethos maintained in recreational patterns are the inevitable resultants of the broad historical forces enumerated above. Thus, leisure-time activities have for the most part, and until very recently, neglected the strong community function of recreation which is found in the Czech Sokol and the Scandinavian communities. The attitudes (now well imbedded because of our speedy and extensive urban adaptation) of repression of spontaneous expression, of passivism and an acceptance of the priority of commercial values as earmarks of recreational merit, have ground themselves deeply into the American temperament.

To trace in detail each one of these historical forces, and the secondary recreational attitudes they have produced, falls beyond the scope of this present article. Let it suffice to say that in the unremitting, crude existence of the frontier, followed eventually by the successive waves of emigrating folk from the eastern border areas, certain marked characteristics and cultural differences were soon apparent. Anglo-Saxon, German, Celt, Gael, Swede, and others coming together had little in common other than the practice of drink. In masculine fashion, they may have drunk rowdily or noisily, or perhaps silently, but each wrapped, nonetheless, in communal isolation, as distinct as the German "*Prosit!*" from the Frenchman's "*À votre santé!*"

This lack of communal integration has been underscored in American life by the heavy repressive hand of our Puritan heritage, endlessly expressed by our avidity for "blue laws," Comstockery, censorship over books, entertainments and personal habits. This basic cultural attitude, with its dual sentiment of repression and mock sanctimony, and publicly acknowledged as a persistent force in American life in the well-known cartooned figure of the lank, cadaverous New England parson, funereal in aspect and wearing the frock coat of spurious and squalid dignity, whose gleaming proboscis belies the sincerity of his motive, serves as a continuing inhibiting factor in accentuating what it considers the anti-moralistic basis of all drinking.

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The readiness with which Americans now eagerly accept those very values as ends-in-themselves which have been spawned by the crawling, gargantuan, megalopolitan urban centers that have transformed the face of America has provided a ready market to those commercial purveyors of recreation emanating from Hollywood, Tin Pan Alley and the Corner Cocktail Lounge. In a civilization whose physical manifestations of urbanism are reared not only in the towering steel and concrete rabbit-warrens of the more than two hundred cities with populations of 50,000 or over which we have created, but are even more profoundly embodied in the spirit of a new kind of urbanism, such industrially and commercially directed psychological attitudes become fundamental. Such attitudes find concrete expression in the need for changeful experience, a mechanized routine of recreation (closely correlated to what Lewis Mumford has so aptly called "life by the clock"), passive entertainment (evoking the various forms of the mass-spectacle) and an emphasis upon sensationalism and commercialized recreational media which always seek the lowest threshold of emotional experience.

The necessities inherent in the impersonal logic of modern technology control the time-budget of each individual's life, impelling the use of each parcelled-out moment of time to its frenzied fulfillment. Thus, the prevalent emotional undertone is so frequently expressed in the grim determination to have a good time "even if it kills you" and the amazing American propensity to "kill time." In our generation, we have even witnessed an amazing American growth of industry and advertising catering to the eradication of "that tired feeling" on Saturday night. We cannot help but be reminded of the English tourist, described so trenchantly in one of the illuminating writings of Heinrich Heine, who is pictured as taking his pleasures with grim determination, sadly and with funereal aspect. Seen in this light, a new insight is gained in the peculiar process described previously of "catching up" at drinking parties. When the rhythmic compulsions of the human organism can find outlet only in accordance with the dictates of the clock, the types of tension-relieving devices produced are likely to be explosive, rather than salutary; destructive, rather than creative and healthfully cathartic.

In token of the passivism which has become so much a part of our

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American recreation, we more commonly refer to "being entertained" rather than to the act of participating in the entertainment itself. Finally, the competitive nature of commercialized recreation in the United States impels the development of such forms of recreation as will have survival value on the basis of changing appeal, i.e., whetting the public taste by the seeming embellishment of last week's extravaganza produced by your competitor. The net result, as far as the public is concerned, is to implant expectant attitudes of speed, change and sensationalism, to which the entrepreneur not only caters, but upon which he is *forced* to capitalize in order to survive. This seething undercurrent of restless excitement and the craving for change has always seemed to European critics a distinctive characteristic of our life. The excessive, almost childlike exuberance and extravagance of many of our amusements, the continued pressure to await the "next week's installment," the speedy automobile ride on Sunday (causing Europeans to remark frequently, "Why do they drive so fast to go nowhere?"), and that crowning achievement of the Hollywood mentality, the so-called "Supercolossal Production," are all aspects of the same process. This sterile search for change for the sake of change is reminiscent of Santayana's famous dictum that "fanaticism is zeal which has lost cognizance of its end."

In conclusion, it seems reasonable to expect that despite sporadic reform movements and conscientious efforts to modify the country's drinking habits, our customary outlooks relative to this entire problem are so entrenched, due to historical necessity and established recreational patterns, that immediate success in transforming our habits is rather dubious. That some success in ameliorating the problem for the pathological or extreme drinker may be possible, as claimed in many quarters, is not disputed here. But any mass reformation of drinking habits suggests the need for concerted attack upon the personality-producing tensions in American life and the modification of certain phases of the entire recreational complex reflective of our culture.

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For E. B. B. and E. D.

Peggy Thomson

One called Elizabeth
And one called Emily
Met the world on
Gossamer terms
(I've seen a cobweb
Conquer a beetle and
I've seen a cobweb
Bind up a hurt)
Spinning their fates
Each as she would
One without surfeit
One without waste

And one loved Robert
And one loved Charles
(They'd great soft eyes
A man remembered)
And both loved living
More than a little. . .
Yet one ran away
While one kept home

And one loved Robert. . .
While one kept home
And loved every wounded bird
Under the sun

⊙ PEGGY THOMSON is a copy writer for an advertising agency. Miss Thomson has written book reviews for the New York *Herald Tribune*. This is her first published poem.

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Are Southerners Really Lazy?

H. C. Brearley

AMONG friends and enemies, early and late, the Southerner has been condemned for his "laziness." Back in 1728, William Byrd of Virginia was highly critical of "the slothfulness of the people" of one of the South's many Sandy Ridges, "where plenty and warm sun confirm them in their disposition to laziness." In 1862, according to an eminent historian, General Robert E. Lee was much disturbed by the inertia of the Southern soldiers whom he was trying to lead in building the fortifications of Richmond. And in 1947, a professor at a Southern university openly defended the thesis, "In the South a man's social status depends upon the amount of hard work that he does *not* do."

Surely in these, and in innumerable other criticisms, there must be a modicum of truth. Superficially at least, the Southerner seems to be a person who, to put it mildly, lacks the initiative and persistence of his Yankee rivals. Is the Southerner's inactivity the result of some inborn deficiency—some taint of the blood? Has a malevolent fate predestined him to a life of sloth and indolence?

Most Southerners vehemently deny the charge of "laziness," but they rarely completely convince themselves or others. One Southern state has even changed its motto from "Here we rest" to "We dare defend our right." This alters the emphasis from "the lazy South" to "the fighting South," but it does little to explain the far from mysterious bases of these accusations of slothfulness.

The only explanation that is at all acceptable to the Southerner is the placing of the blame squarely upon the immutable providence that gave the region its climate. "The hot weather, you know," is,

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in fact, one of the South's top defenses against criticism. (As such, it ranks with poverty, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and the presence of the Negro.) The climatic theory is stated thus by Ellsworth Huntington of Yale University, "In the South we find less energy, less vitality, less education, and fewer men who rise to eminence than in the North, not because Southerners are in any way innately inferior to Northerners but apparently because of the adverse climate."

This comforting doctrine does not, however, bear close examination. In Huntington's own *Civilization and Climate*, from which the quotation is taken, he states that about 63 degrees Fahrenheit is the best temperature for industrial and other manual work. Yet he ignores the fact that much of the South has mean annual temperatures around 63 degrees Fahrenheit, and if averages are deceptive—as they sometimes are—the effects of the South's hot summers cannot be assumed to extend throughout the year. And many visitors from the energetic North give generous praise to the South's briskly cool winters and equable spring and autumn seasons. Moreover, it is possible that the human organism is quite as depleted of energy by its efforts to maintain its normal temperature of 98.6 degrees during the bitter Northern winters as it is enervated by the opposite struggle during the hot days of Southern summers. The Michigan farmer, hovering over his stove after each painful sortie to the barn to care for his cattle, is perhaps merely the obverse picture of the Carolina share-cropper dozing upon his tiny porch during the "long noon" of an August day.

Admitting the South's disagreeable summer climate does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that efficiency must thereby be markedly decreased. Careful studies, especially by the New York State Committee on Ventilation, indicate that high temperature and humidity and little movement of air have much less effect upon *true* efficiency than upon *felt* efficiency. However unpleasant may be the effects of hot, damp and stuffy air, they seem to have little measurable influence upon output, provided the worker really concentrates upon his task. If these conclusions are not in error, the Southerner could, even during the hottest and stickiest days of summer, made good records in both quality and quantity of work, provided he could

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learn to ignore his feelings of discomfort, fatigue and inefficiency.

The conclusion seems inescapable that the direct physiological effects of the South's hot summers upon the year's round of activity level of its people must be small indeed. This does not deny the probability that the *indirect* effects of climate may have far-reaching consequences. The climate certainly does affect other parts of the natural environment, such as the incidence of parasites, that in turn may greatly influence the Southerner's energy. Similarly, climatic conditions may combine with cultural factors—for example, in the development of the plantation—to establish attitudes unfavorable to hard work. But the emphasis upon the direct bodily effects of the Southern climate itself is doubtless a satisfying rationalization that leads toward fatalism and the neglect of more reprehensible, but at the same time more remediable, explanations.

Ill health ranks easily among the more significant of these basic reasons for the South's low activity level. A sick man is a tired man, and a half-sick one certainly seems to be "lazy." In 1938 the National Emergency Council reported, "The low-income belt of the South is a belt of sickness, misery and unnecessary death. Its large proportion of low-income citizens are more subject to disease than the people of any similar area" in the United States. The same story is told by the rejections for military service during World War II. Up to June 1, 1944, every Southern state was in the lowest third of percentages of draftees certified as suitable for duty in the armed services. Other data on military rejections give the same tragic report that the South is a region of ill health and physical defect. These conditions do not, of course, arise from any innate weakness, but from ignorance of preventive measures, inadequate medical services, and the inability to purchase proper food and care.

The South also has at least two major parasitic diseases that sap the energy of its people. A decade ago the area was estimated to have 2,000,000 cases of malaria each year. Relatively few deaths result from this source, but the malaria victim may suffer for years, or even a lifetime, from the loss of physical vigor resulting from the destruction of his red blood corpuscles and the injury to his liver and spleen.

Possibly just as significant as malaria is the presence of intestinal

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parasites, especially the hookworm that has been aptly called "the germ of laziness." These parasites literally rob the sufferer of much of the benefit of the food that he eats, and condemn him to a state of chronic fatigue. Anyone who has observed at first hand the enervating inroads of malaria and intestinal parasites upon human vitality will not hesitate to hold them responsible for much of the South's apparent "laziness."

But ill health may not be as significant as is malnutrition in the making of the Southerner's "laziness." Studies of the effect of underfeeding upon volunteer conscientious objectors reveal that activity levels fall rapidly when the intake of food is decreased. Similarly, the half-starved prisoners of World War II have given graphic reports of the hopelessness and helplessness of inanition, of the "dhobi stare" upon faces stupified by long-continued hunger in Japanese concentration camps.

Semi-starvation in the South is not dramatic, but it is chronic and long continued from generation to generation. For example, Youmans and his associates at Vanderbilt Medical School found that in a comparatively well-to-do middle Tennessee county 14.3 per cent of the whites and 42.1 per cent of the Negroes obtained less than the 1250 calories of food supposed to be the minimum daily requirement for each person. The primary reason for this deficiency of food, which is probably typical of much of the South, is not ignorance but unmitigated poverty. Like other groups, Southerners have some indefensible food practices and prejudices, but in general they wish tasty and nutritious foods quite as much as do non-Southerners. In fact, the "Southern cooking" of the upper classes is justly acclaimed. But according to statistics of income, membership in the upper classes is necessarily quite limited. In general, the South's per capita annual income is only about 60 per cent of the nation's average. Even in 1947, a relatively prosperous year for agricultural areas, every one of the fifteen Southern states had per capita incomes in the lowest third of the entire country. Yet the per capita dollar cost of an adequate diet is approximately the same below the Ohio as it is north of it. The Southerner does not obtain his food at lower prices—he merely goes hungry, or exists upon a cheaper and generally less nutritious diet.

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The deficiency of the B vitamins in the diet of Southerners is especially significant. This group of vitamins seem to be necessary for a normal activity level, yet it is often notably lacking upon Southern tables. The poor man in Dixie frequently has to content himself with his "three-M diet"—meat, molasses and meal. The meat, however, is usually salt pork—"fat back," that provides calories but little of the vitamins of fresh lean meat. The molasses, or its equivalent in sugar or corn syrup, is also low or lacking in B vitamins. The meal is usually bolted or degerminated corn meal, from which the vitamins of the whole grain have been largely removed.

If the Southern family is fortunate enough to be above the poverty level, the food may be more wholesome, yet still not adequate. The corn meal of the poor man may be replaced by white flour for hot biscuits, or by boiled polished rice, but both of these cereals reach the table with but a small part of their vitamin-rich natural content. Vegetables, especially the leafy ones, are traditionally cooked by long periods of boiling, perhaps with "a pinch of soda" that effectively neutralizes the vitamin C content. Difficulties of refrigeration, and traditional prejudice against the use of fresh pork during the summer months, also prevent an adequate intake of foods rich in B vitamins. As a consequence of these factors, middle and upper class Southerners are unfortunately often not as free from malnutrition as are similar groups in other regions of the United States.

In summer the need for the B vitamins, especially for thiamin, is markedly increased, according to studies by Clarence A. Mills and others. For example, Mills has found that white rats kept in a room at 90 degrees Fahrenheit required twice as much thiamin for healthy development as did a control group in a 68 degree temperature. The hot-room rats on a thiamin deficient diet were "too lazy" to seek a supply of better food nearby, even when the cage doors were left open. By his Panama studies Mills has also found evidence that lean meat and eggs produced in tropical climates are much less rich in thiamin than are similar foods imported from the temperate zones.

These investigations have a double significance for the Southerner, since they show that his need for thiamin greatly increases during the summer months, when his intake of this vital food element is at a low level, largely because of the inadequate supply of fresh lean

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meat. And even if he produces his own meat or buys it locally, apparently he may be purchasing a product that is somewhat deficient in the very food element that he himself so urgently needs. Other research studies also indicate that food raised on poor or eroded lands, prevalent in the South, is very likely to be short in nutritional value.

The South's lack of an adequate diet is tragically illustrated by the fact that 90 per cent of the nation's deaths from pellagra occur in the thirteen Southern states. Pellagra is a disease resulting primarily from a deficiency of one of the B vitamins, niacin, also known as nicotinic acid. Although only about one thousand Southerners die of pellagra each year, this fact does not begin to indicate the extent of this deficiency disease, since it is estimated that only about one-sixth of the pellagra cases even consult a physician, and that many thousands of medically unrecognized "near pellagra" victims are to be found among the South's millions of underfed people.

To infer, however, that ill health and hunger are the sole explanations of the low activity level of many Southerners would be a great oversimplification. Other factors may be less dramatic or measurable, but they nevertheless enter into the pattern of life under analysis.

Slavery, for example, resulted in the discrediting of hard manual labor by either whites or blacks, and helped put the Southern gentleman of leisure at the top of the social pyramid. Even today "working like a Negro" is a term of reproach, just as "Kaffir work" has, for similar reasons, the same connotation among the whites of South Africa.

In the North and West, the European immigrant and his children are easily among the most vigorous and energetic workers. But since the Revolution, the South has received few immigrants except those unwillingly brought from Africa. Moreover, the conservative South exports many of her most ambitious "go-getters." Those left behind are more likely to be satisfied with things as they are.

Much of Southern farming, especially the cultivation of cotton and of cigarette tobacco, is really only a six- or seven-months task. This has permitted many rural Southerners to cherish the long winter vacation and the mid-summer "lay-by time." The relative absence of dairying and poultry and livestock raising has also enabled the

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Southern rural worker to enjoy much hunting, fishing and plain or fancy loafing, and has made him accustomed to more leisure than even wealthy non-Southerners normally find it possible to attain.

In America, as elsewhere, the rural pattern of life is slower-paced than that of city-dwellers. This slower reaction does not, however, indicate any innate inferiority or inherent laziness. It is merely the result of a less stimulating environment, relatively free from the now-or-never decisions of the man of the city. And the South, it should be remembered, is the most rural region in the United States, and even its larger cities are greatly affected by rural ways and attitudes. A significant part of the South's leisurely manner of living is, accordingly, rural rather than Southern. Even in energetic New England, some farmers are markedly deliberate in speech and action. Yet no one assumes this slowness to be an unmistakable evidence either of laziness or of moral degeneracy.

Another element in the South's alleged laziness is primarily a difference in life values. The true Southerner, white or colored, is not concerned with mere activity for activity's sake. He wishes to sip the joys of life, rather than to down them at one gulp. Often his motto is, "don't hurry through life or you'll pass by more than you catch up with." Perhaps some of this attitude is a rationalization for a low level of activity, but a part of it is a reflection of a philosophy of life that emphasizes the present rather than the future. In Southern cities this leisurely tempo of life is now becoming but a memory—the crowds in Atlanta and Birmingham scurry along with set faces in much the same unhappy way as they do in New York or Pittsburgh. But over the South as a whole, the people still believe in taking time to enjoy themselves.

The South has suffered much at the hands of the local-color school of writers—native, Northern and European. These writers, with the most honorable of avowed intentions, have so misrepresented the South that Southerners sometimes hardly recognize themselves in literature. The hard-working yeoman farmer is ignored, but the shiftless "poor whites" become the heroes of Tobacco Roads. The self-respecting Negro artisan is crowded out of the pages of books by the more picturesque but atypical migratory singer of "blues." An occasional planter sits upon his veranda and drinks a mint julep, but

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for every one of these there are thousands of farmers who literally earn their bread in the sweat of their faces.

"O'nery" folk are not confined to the South. "Poor white trash" can be found in the Midwest, and ne'er-do-wells live in every Northern city. Even if the South has more than its proportionate share of the lazy and the incompetent, this is no reason to condemn all Southerners indiscriminately. The many thousands who work with vigor and initiative should not be made to suffer from a hasty and inaccurate generalization.

One favorable aspect of the whole situation is that the principal conditions that have brought about these accusations of wholesale laziness are at least remediable, although not without much expense and cooperative effort. In the first place, the development of inexpensive air conditioning may soon give many Southerners the equivalent of a more invigorating summer climate. The enervating effects of even hard labor in the hot sun can be at least partially counteracted by a night's rest in a cooled bedroom. In the South, as in other warm regions, summer cooling may some day become as common as winter heating in the temperate zones.

But the South does not need mechanical refrigeration as much as it needs: (1) larger incomes for its numerous underprivileged groups; (2) more adequate medical care of all types; (3) a varied and nutritious diet for everyone; and (4) a realistic understanding both at home and elsewhere of the conditions and attitudes that have been erroneously interpreted as laziness.

In recent years, moreover, many of the situations that have fostered the South's reputation for laziness have shown significant improvement. The ravages of malaria and hookworm are being markedly decreased. Growing industrial development, more soil conservation, and higher prices for farm products have resulted in some relative increase in income. These larger incomes, the free lunch programs in the schools, and the emphasis upon home gardens and "the seven basic foods," are slowly but surely bettering dietary practices. Hard work more often receives recognition. Possibly the day is not far distant when "these lazy Southerners" will be recognized as an inaccurate stereotype that has gone with the music and the magnolias of the South that almost never was.

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Natural Song

Richard Wilbur

The slow acquirements of the air
Have levitated Carthage now;
Its stones are dancing overhead,
Its morseled glory must endure,
And let the wind blow anyhow,
The freshest gust from anywhere
Settles our streets with all the dead.
The natural is never pure.

The winds are traders, and the flood
Shares with the shore, and turns to take
Whatever land has littered there.
Washing the drowned it does not cure
But scatters death, whose fingers rake
The tides that carry off his blood:
For all refreshment is to share,
The natural is never pure.

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Though cities are in smoke refined
The fire must stink of what it burns,
The dungy charnel earth can wear
A bright and wheaten chevelure,
And nothing after pureness yearns
Except the vileness of the mind,
Which would be sole, and cease to share.
The natural is never pure.

In nature is no purity,
The virgin and the anchorite
Are masoned of eternal death,
And when another death shall raze
Their walls of mind, then shall a flight
Of sole and soured powders flee
Refreshed upon the wind's old breath
And fall throughout the vital maze.

©RICHARD WILBUR, whose first volume of poems, *The Beautiful Changes*, was published in 1947, is a junior fellow at Harvard University.

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Robert Frost and Poetic Fashion

Sidney Cox

ROBERT FROST has never let his head get caught in a halo. He has never stood still for admirers to pull a laurel wreath down over his eyes. He has kept free to exchange a taunt and a you-and-I-both wink with rogues, and with the repressed rascal in nearly all of us. He has let nothing come between his eyes and the "funny world."

That slight offishness of his in part accounts for the success of his poems in the Armed Services Edition, in Pocket Books and in the Modern Library. It partly accounts, too, for the fact that no philosopher or artist is better worth listening to, no writer since I have been alive so well worth reading. But his slight offishness, his refusal "to adapt" himself "a mite," also accounts for the fact that he is out of fashion.

Of all the lists of books that men of extensive reading gave to the book reviews for Christmas, 1947, only two included Robert Frost's 1947 books. Skimpy and embarrassed or misunderstanding reviews of *Steeple Bush* and *A Masque of Mercy* have appeared toward the back of the book review section. And more than half of the current books and articles on poetry and contemporary literature either mention him rapidly in passing, or leave him out. I have pondered the much greater notice given in 1947 to sophisticated former students of mine who have not composed their thought from chances taken, experiences deeply felt and slowly contemplated, and purposes accomplished. Their punch-packing novels and carefully documented

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This article is the first chapter of *A Swinger of Birches*, a book on Robert Frost, still in preparation. The quotations from Frost are reprinted from three volumes of his poetry: *A Masque of Reason* (copyright, 1945), *A Masque of Mercy* (copyright, 1947) and *Steeple Bush* (copyright, 1947) by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

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world-problem books are thoughtful, so to say, and, so to say, well written; their books are timely and ephemeral. I have pondered the authoritative praise heaped on abstract, life-fearing or boyishly didactic poets. So many are rickety, with hypertrophied, hanging heads. So many are too shallow in their breathing for real laughter. Robert Frost is plainly out of fashion, I say, almost sighing.

But he has never been in fashion. In spite of all the honorary degrees, memberships in academies and international societies, individual awards and Pulitzer prizes, in spite of his large place in almost all anthologies, he has never been in fashion. The seriously serious have either bracketed him with Whittier; tried, as Amy Lowell did, to fit him to a program; or dismissed him for failing to writhe in verse with the fashionable complaints.

For twenty years he went undiscovered while George Herbert Palmer waved away "The Death of the Hired Man" as not a poem, and Richard Hovey told him how to make such poems poetic. His poems, Hovey told him, had too much the sounds of speech. In 1914 Stuart Sherman couldn't see much in *A Boy's Will*, though later his eyes cleared. And after *North of Boston*, some reader marked in each successive volume a falling off. From the first, minor poets and would-be poets have somewhat anxiously sought for some other living poet to prefer. And they have had the ear of those who wanted directions about taste. They saw to it that such "preternatural self-confidence" should not become the fashion.

In 1947 Robert Frost's thinking was no more incorrigible than it was in 1911 when I first felt, on frequent walks or talking late at night, the shock and challenge of his common sense against my idealism, his subtle discrimination against my simplifying. He is no more original, when Randall Jarrell of the *avant garde* finds him defeated and Malcolm Cowley of the lost and found generation finds him unsocial, than he was in 1916 when a callow critic, after a day of conversation, called him an anarchist. He is no further from the approved line of thought which independent minds should follow with one accord than he was in 1917. He smilingly suggested, that year, that he and I give the Bolsheviks a further chance to show what they were up to before we joined the hue and cry of the best minds.

But there is a difference. It is not merely that he is "more sure of

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all" he "thought was true." It is not merely that he has since done thirty years' worth of living, and "kept" from time what he most desired. It is also that in 1947 he was a little more obviously an irritatingly original thinker. His old admirers and his new scorners realize a little better than readers of thirty years ago, or even ten years ago, that he is entertaining ideas that call their lamented lives in question.

I am not sure that it is wiser art to confine your deeper meanings to implications which almost no one gets, and so let people love you for your nice colts, funny farmers and wistfully remembered birches. Whether implicit or explicit in his expression, Robert Frost now and always thinks astronomic circles round other writers who have weathered the same wars, panics, booms and unemphatic seasons. Either way, he is both in touch with common sense, and adding to it. Such thinking and fashion never coincide.

He is now hard to understand, misunderstood and "understood wrong." It begins now to be apparent that he does not take for granted what almost all the much-trained take for granted. Here in a short list are some of the assumptions he does *not* make. By not making them he loses readers.

1. That history is or can be like a railroad track to El Dorado.
2. That reason will eventually make life resemble logic.
3. That science will at last render personal risks superfluous.
4. That "statistics show" and that "a committee should be formed."
5. That some single good (like equality or peace or love) can justify the permanent surrender of all other goods.
6. That men do, can or should put "number one" in second place.
7. That the crisis of civilization or the plight of the artist is either astonishing or new.
8. That destruction threatens to swallow up construction.
9. That man will soon find a way to prevent decay while fostering growth.
10. That time is of the essence more than are things a man can save from time.
11. That we can save man from the machine by setting up a mechanism.

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In 1947 Robert Frost was playing pranks, on his own *dies irae*. Mirth was all his moral; teasing men and defying destiny was his mood. He had never been sadder and he had never been more genuinely jaunty. Let those pronounce his lighter manner "coy" who can as well stare down the grotesque ironies of their private lives. Even in those caperings that irritate the solemn and embarrass the earnest, wisdom is implicit. Trifling is the thing to do with inflated trifles. Even with God, the fear of not pleasing whom begins all wisdom, Robert Frost sets his soft hat on one side of his head and looks Him in the eye.

As always, he is saying to his readers, "The like of this, according to your nature, you, too, could do and preserve your poise." He said in conversation before he ever said in verse, "The one indecency's to make a fuss."

But reviewers of *Steeple Bush* and *A Masque of Mercy* cannot forgive him for not fussing; they cannot bear his sly reiteration that life is really always like the life we find so terrifying. They don't want to be aware that finding a way to take life with similar conflicts and identical elements is just the perennial human enterprise.

The two books of 1947 are hard to understand for those who never felt the truth of his earlier books. They are neither obscure nor lacking in the highest seriousness for any who took "time out for reassembly" when they read the earlier *A Masque of Reason*. Readers who have not submitted too docilely to reason came to agree with Job that

> . . . the discipline man needed most
> Was to learn his submission to unreason.

Both 1947 books are significant and clear to those who earlier went beyond agreeing with Job that

> We don't know where we are, or who we are.
> We don't know one another; don't know You;
> Don't know what time it is.

They whirled with Job and Robert Frost, questioning their despair,

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We don't know, don't we?
Oh, we know well enough to go ahead with.

And the reader who cares to understand, just as he cares to understand his own experience, is prepared for the poems in *Steeple Bush*. He has already assented that

. . . there's no such thing as Earth's becoming
An easier place for man to save his soul in.
Except as a hard place to save his soul in,
A trial ground where he can try himself
And find out whether he is any good.
It would be meaningless.

To remark in haste, "the Puritan point of view," or "medieval ethics," or "he ought to read Freud," is to prepare oneself, instead, to misunderstand the life-enjoying poems in *Steeple Bush* and the religious play, *A Masque of Mercy*.

Untrained intelligence, free from formulas, is required to read Robert Frost in 1947, as in 1911, 1914, 1923 and all the other years. We have to be alive enough to budge a little from our point of view. Every time Robert Frost has read me a new poem or play it has brought almost to my lips the pedant or the prude in me. But isn't it a shade crude? I have thought; or too colloquial; or a trace facetious; or rather inconclusive; or slightly harsh; or a little too modest? Fortunately, my mechanical criteria never quite benumbed my recollection that I had found Robert Frost more subtly true than any other of the eminent and talented whom I have known. So I have looked again, with my mind prepared for vigorous, subtle and unprecedented motions, and usually the poem has shown me that if my objections had been met, the fidelity would have been less. As written, the poem would never seem too simple or too cosmic to be true. It's too bad we have to grow in order to like great poems. It's too bad we have to start imagining in a new way.

Those who cannot chew up their formulas and pull their minds together newly have to call Robert Frost's "One Step Backward Taken," for instance, reactionary. Apparently many trained minds cannot take one step in any direction; they would topple off the lockstep line or down from the crowded pinnacle. Robert Frost offers

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them nothing cozier to join than America. He firmly pushes off all attempts to snuggle into his point of view and take up squatter's rights. He obstinately declines to be a supplier of formulas. Unlike several eminent contemporaries, he would never proffer his "sight and insight," without at the same time flouting the very idea of uniform seeing. In 1947, as in 1890, he felt that it would be absurd for him to think of pronouncing finally.

"The evidence is almost in," he says. And all he will declare, as according to him poets have always declared, is, "Sometimes it seems as if —" Quite as certainly as half a lifetime back, he can't tell anyone what to make of life.

He feels the need of mercy, not followers. So he teases his own wisdom, mixing the trivial and the profound. Better not take him too seriously, he taunts. But let us, even so, take a further look at a random few of his 1947 poems.

"Directive," for instance, is not at all a beautiful statement of an old man's defeat. It is not a stoical acknowledgment that there is no grail any more. Any broken, child's-playhouse cup is all you need for grail. The irony has been seen, even by an earnest poet, in the wrong place. In the last two lines there is no irony, except that profound suggestions always seem too simple,

> Here are your waters and your watering place.
> Drink and be whole again beyond confusion.

He really means it. Get off by yourself,

> Back out of all this now too much for us,

and listen to the flow of a brook, notice again the way one form of life disappears and another quietly comes back, realize in your breath and pulse the rhythm. "Lost enough to find yourself," the quiet continuity of destruction and growth will be restored in you, and you will no longer be frantic. Nor will the world seem dry and sterile.

"The Ingenuities of Debt," also has been taken wrong. It is not underwriting the saw,

> Take Care to Sell Your Horse Before He Dies
> The Art of Life Is Passing Losses On.

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It is undermining it. It is reminding us that the sand will always bury walls erected in cynicism. The despoilers of the meek will not for long inherit the earth, it freshly says. And, as in all true poems, the way of saying it is what says it most.

The "Five Nocturnes" are as much gay as they are of the night. You should see the lid draw down over one blue eye when you read,

Bravado
Have I not walked without any upward look
Of caution under stars that very well
Might not have missed me when they shot and fell?
It was a risk I had to take—and took.

One thing you can take from Robert Frost is set forth in "An Unstamped Letter in Our Rural Letter Box." It really has happened to him (and it can happen to you) that he "himself had the equivalent, only within" of "two stars having coalesced."

Inside the brain
Two memories that long had lain,
Now quivered toward each other, lipped
Together, and together slipped;
And for a moment all was plain
That men have thought about in vain.

Be ready for the like to happen to you. The plainness won't last, but you'll stop depending on the new finalities.

"A Steeple on the House," read in the way Robert Frost asks young men to read—"lending yourself to the writer, first"—is better than anything I've found in Kierkegaard concerning what religion still is to one who can't imagine heaven, or desire it, but has had suggestions of eternity.

"The Middleness of the Road" is not saying it's too bad, but we must be mediocre or have the meanness to go to no extremes. It says that our limited actual motion, which stays on the common road and goes from here to there, gains whatever value it has from a relation with ultimates that we can never attain; it says, let's be both practical and religious. It's not really practical to ignore the "emotional absolutes" suggested by experience; it's not being really poetic to disdain the limited accomplishment.

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Robert Frost's poems teasing about the bomb, government planning and the federation of the world are against the fashion. But they are not frivolous. They arise from acknowledging fixed limits, with an acceptance that is gay because of "emotional absolutes" that are his, and that are available to all. He would, if he could, spare a few of us from the disillusion, the spirit-crushing disillusion, which he regretfully foresees.

Robert Frost, who read the Smyth report on the atomic bomb as soon as it was published, is not indifferent. But he remembers that no one has ever been exempt from dying.

In *A Masque of Mercy* he has high, wide and handsome fun with the spiritual realities which matter most to men. He lets the great themes play in a medium of casual language and trivial banter. The themes belong equally to eternity and to everyday life. They are too animate to stay within frames of reference and systems of dialectic. We can fully avail ourselves of wise ideas only if we let them touch and go—only in play. They are ours only as we care so much for them that we trust them to continue in effect when we let them mix with the common and the trivial. They evade custodians. But we can gain poise in touch with them if we will "entertain" them, as Robert Frost keeps saying, and let them be entertaining.

To read *A Masque of Mercy* you have to let yourself go. You have to be the theater for the masque until you begin to entertain, instead, the ideas at play:

> The way of understanding is partly mirth.

The main idea in *A Masque of Mercy* is that we can't help wanting to achieve a fulfillment of the highest we have been led to imagine; that we can't help failing; that even our very best may not be right; that, consequently, it takes great courage to act; and, at last, that even the most courageous requires mercy. We can't be sure we're right, even when we do our utmost. We have to bow before a source of mercy.

How such a main idea can be expressed in anything resembling a play, you will have to read the masque to see. But you may suspect that Jonah, the tragic figure, who asks for justice "before all else"

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was suggested by the demands of the finer-grained young students whose daring Robert Frost has tried to cherish while he smiled at their untempered expectations.

Jonas Dove starts the masque, hurt, because, as at Ninevah, his God always turns merciful instead of executing the threats Jonah had pronounced in his name. But in the course of the masque Jonas is convinced by Paul, the psychiatrist, that justice cannot be had pure. And that realization, since wanting justice had been all his being, ends Jonas. The character, His-Brother's-Keeper, whose Christian name has driven him to general scepticism, is at the same time—against brilliant resistance on his part—also convinced. He remains on guard, however, against such zeal as makes proselytes by torture. And he retains common sense, warning Jonas,

> Don't let him make you see too bright a gate
> Or you will come to with a foolish feeling.

Throughout the more and more profound discussion, Keeper retains also his sense of humor. Paul is detached, wise, rather saintly, in danger of being humorless. Jesse Bel (Jezebel), Keeper's wife and Paul's patient, takes a "solitary social" drink whenever being in keeping with the times doesn't quite suffice. She is "sick of everything," and her husband tells her,

> Nervous is all the great things ever made you.

The people and the scene, as well as the dialogue, are both contemporary and of all time. Psychiatric, religious and revolutionary fashions of our day are not the only items discovered to be amusingly related to the eternal necessity for mercy. Indescribable as the masque is, it is fun each time you read it, and at last it takes its place with Euripides' *Alcestis* and Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The more fully you enjoy it, the less apt you are to feel overwhelmed by the day's news.

Both Robert Frost's 1947 books are valuable for the very traits that baffle people whose minds have become too well adapted to the newest theories. Robert Frost never represents merely his time.

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The Man Who Invented Basketball

M. Whitcomb Hess

VICTOR HUGO says that if it had not rained on the night before Waterloo, the world's history would have been changed. Just as a little water turned the course of history then, so did some careless oaths spoken by a Canadian football player back in the eighties rewrite modern sports. Providence—to paraphrase Hugo—in order to make a new game, needed only a few idle curses.

This is the way it happened: at McGill University in Montreal, where James Naismith was an outstanding football player, the guard next to him started swearing during practice one day (the McGill boys used to rise at six o'clock in the morning to practice football in severely cold weather). Suddenly he stopped and apologized. "I didn't notice you were there, Jim," he said to his companion.

That he asked Naismith's pardon for something which seemed trivial enough, considering the circumstances, brought forcibly to Naismith's mind the importance of personal influence. The words, "I didn't notice you were there, Jim," rang in his mind for days.

"I hadn't paid any attention to the swearing itself," he said long afterwards, "for I had heard much more competent and fluent swearing than that in Canada's lumber camps; but this realization of the discomfort of playing outdoors in cold weather changed the whole course of my life."

He talked over the situation with the Y.M.C.A. secretary at McGill, who told him of the international training school for Y.M.C.A. workers at Springfield, Massachusetts. It was not, however, until he had served three postgraduate years of coaching at

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McGill, and had received another degree from Presbyterian College, that he came in 1890 to Springfield and, the next year, at the age of twenty-nine, to his game's invention. (Basketball, incidentally, is the only modern sport which has not evolved through centuries of change, but instead sprung—full-grown as Athene from the brow of Zeus—from the mind of the man from Montreal.)

Seven years before Naismith came to Kansas, where he was to remain a prominent member of the faculty for forty years, he had worked out the game that was to alter the face of the world of sports. Its name was more or less accidental. He had, he said, as he told us how it happened, reached the point in the invention which called for receptacles, and he asked the superintendent of buildings in the college at Springfield, where he was employed to teach physical education, for two boxes about eighteen inches square.

"What do you want them for?" the superintendent with the Yankee name of Stebbins inquired.

"I'm figuring out a game," Naismith told him, "and I need the boxes to put on poles, so that a large ball can be thrown into them."

Stebbins had no boxes. "But look here," he said helpfully, "I've got two empty peach baskets down at my house if they'll do you any good."

They could do Naismith some good, and did—and not only with his special class of eighteen athletes, for whom he had been commissioned to create an indoor game, but with unnumbered millions from then on. Some of the first players wanted to call the game "Naismith Ball," but the inventor told them that such a name would kill it immediately. He approved the title "basketball" with the same swift recognition of appropriateness with which he had welcomed the Stebbins peach baskets. Enthusiastically received from the start, basketball was being played in foreign lands before the game was two years old. Today it is the most universally popular sport.

Basketball's few rule changes include the rule that limits the number of men on each team to five instead of the original nine (to take care of the eighteen members of the class for whom the game was invented). This change, occurring in 1895, merely eliminated the two goal keepers and the two outside centers, all extras in the game. Other rules, such as the one requiring cord nets (1898), instead of

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the earlier peach baskets or the wire mesh baskets also used, came naturally enough; but no truly drastic changes from the basic outline of the game Naismith perfected in less than two weeks' time have been made.

One incident recalled from the game's early stages always brought a glint to the inventor's eye. His first notebook of rules had contained a diagram dividing the playing court into sections by three dotted lines, made merely to simplify the picture. When girls took up the same at Smith and invited Naismith to see a game, he said to one of the coaches, "Why do your girls stay in those limited areas?"

"It's according to your diagram," the coach replied, showing him the rule book with the dotted lines.

"Those lines?" he said, and started to laugh. Then he checked himself, and declared soberly, "That's right for the women's game, not for the men's." And the division-of-the-field rule was added to the book. He saw that such a division would make the game less strenuous; for the girls in the nineties were not notably athletic.

When he first came to Kansas as head of the physical education department and counselor to the students, he had just received the degree of doctor of medicine from the University of Colorado. Though he never practiced medicine professionally, he was a member of the Kansas Medical Association; and though he never held a regular pastorate, he was an ordained Presbyterian minister. No others of the world's great sportsmen have combined the three professions of teacher, doctor and minister in one career. In 1938, the year before he died, he was called to the McGill Theological Seminary, and given the degree of doctor of divinity; but he had studied early to become a minister, and had received degrees in theology from the Canadian school before coming to the United States.

Death came to him at the age of seventy-eight in Lawrence, Kansas, on November 28, 1939. He had been ill only a week and, until that brief sickness, had had unusual health; a friend had written the year of his death that the straightness of his carriage seemed that of a man many years younger than he actually was.

For the last four decades of his life (1898-1939) he was a professor of education at the University of Kansas, and my neighbor in Lawrence on Mississippi Street. He was also my teacher in an extraordi-

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nary course called "The Physical Development of the Child," which dealt with the concomitant mental and spiritual development of the child. My notebook contains a fascinating record of the master sportsman and his class. The genial robust temper of the lecturer still speaks in his words on biology and moral philosophy. With him, questions of physical development inevitably led to questions of moral development, and *vice versa*. Duty to him meant using intelligence for direction; and he was as fact-minded as Carlyle or Samuel Johnson. Sometimes I walked to class with him; and it was he who showed me the short cut to the Administration Building, where his classes were held. "I never take the long way when I can help it," he said, as we crossed vacant lots and climbed the steep slope beyond the streetcar tracks. This was symbolic of his general attitude toward life's problems, to the heart of which he never took the long way when he could help it.

One of his earnest desires as an educator was that education should be made worthwhile and yet not be compulsorily moral. In the long run, all good things are pleasant, just as all evil things are painful, he said. He was always working to outwit the devil at his own game, using the natural attraction in sports to lead young men from devilment, as he put it. He found it a sad commentary on our social system that there is so little to interest youths from 16 to 21. It was natural for them to want to go places, he thought, and natural for them to go to the wrong places if those places appeared to be the most interesting.

"When God breathed in man he gave him a living soul all the way down through the evolutionary progression," one of my notes from the Naismith course reads, "so that the hands, the feet, as parts of the soul, may be taught goodness too." What was obvious to him in the purely physical field—the fact that "we can't work haphazardly at things and expect to get anywhere"—he accepted as his working principle in all other realms of conduct.

While he believed that philosophers in general "look at their own insides too much," he was, in his own way, a high-powered moral philosopher. He was as proud of the fact that basketball shows up the egotist, the quick-tempered, the worrier, as poor players, as he was that it develops good muscular coordination. "Sportsmanship," he once told our class, "is shown as much in fighting for rights as in con-

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ceding rights." And to be a good sportsman is to show good judgment, an achievement which is the end of knowledge (as Descartes also held) in any and all fields.

But he was most pleased that his game is fun to play, a triumphant outwitting of the devil in the field of pleasure. The body, he believed as firmly as any scholastic philosopher, is the soul's immediate organ and instrument. To the mental measurers in psychology he had just this to say: "The mechanical can be measured; the amount of nervous energy can never be measured." Again, referring to World War I, he said: "The Germans might compute the speed and range of bullets, but they could not measure what American soldiers would do."

Beyond the effect of his invention, his sphere of influence was large. Thousands on thousands of students came into direct contact with him; many more thousands knew him as a campus figure at the University of Kansas, at the University of Colorado, Springfield, and (earlier) in Canada. Some of his teaching was done on the battlegrounds of the first world war in France, and with the Kansas regiment on the Mexican border, where he served as army chaplain for four months before World War I. For several months during 1917 and 1918 he was in active service at home, and for nineteen more months he was overseas with the American armies as a Y.M.C.A. traveling director in the physical education department.

His friends tried to persuade him to stay on this side of the ocean in 1918. To go to war, he would have to leave his wife, their three daughters and two sons; and he was fifty-six years old. But, as a Kansis City *Star* reporter wrote: "They reckoned not on the spirit that is in 'Doc' Naismith." The same reporter described an incident of World War I as follows:

A group of K.U. men shivering from the cold and rain and mud and flu of those days in France, remember well how the door of their tiny billet flew open one noon and a hearty voice boomed out: "Well, how's my gang?" They looked up, and there was Doc Naismith, soaking wet, mud-encrusted even to his thick mustache, but grinning at them even as he had grinned in the placid days back on K.U.'s "hill" months before.

"Doc Naismith!" they yelled, jumping on him, and pounding his

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back until you would have thought it would break. "Where did you come from anyway?"

"Oh, I was just passing through Mehun on a train, and an M.P. told me there were some Kansas boys out this way, so I walked out to see you," he explained. "I thought you might be lonesome, and I've got a lot of papers and news from home."

Doc Naismith didn't mention the fact that Mehun was fifteen kilometers away down a boggy road, or that he had walked that distance carrying a heavy duffel bag in pouring rain to see his "gang."

The spirit that was in Doc Naismith was consistently cheerful and practical. To him the good life was what he called the capable life. Napoleon and all others of his cast of mind were not, he told us, capable men—they were not capable of doing the things they ought to have done. In the present state of men, of course, he realized that wars are sometimes necessary evils. "There are," he said, "more important things even than the saving of lives." For the inventor of basketball not only believed in soul, was very sure of God; he also, and determinedly, was very sure of his fellow men and of himself.

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Portrait . . .

W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS

J. Saunders Redding

The first time I saw W. E. Burghardt DuBois was on an occasion when he spoke in Philadelphia back in 1922 or '23. I remember that my father, who was then secretary of the Wilmington, Delaware, branch of the N.A.A.C.P., anticipated the event for days. I think he had never seen DuBois either. But he had read him. He had read aloud to his uncomprehending offspring passages from *The Souls of Black Folk* and from *Darkwater,* and editorials from the *Crisis.* Indeed, though we could child-handle and mistreat the *Pathfinder,* the *Literary Digest,* and the *National Geographic* without fear of reprimand, the *Crisis* was strictly inviolate until my father himself had unwrapped and read it—often, as I have said, aloud. Afterwards it was turned over to us, and we looked at the pictures of the colored babies, the handsome colored college graduates, and the famous colored college athletes, and read Effie Lee Newsome's "Children's Corner." Miss Newsome, we thought, was a fine writer. The name of W. E. B. DuBois meant little to us as children.

But it had begun to mean something by the time I had reached my early teens. The meaning was purely emotional. We had a family friend whose sister had often danced with DuBois in his Harvard days. In church on Sundays, the dark, passionate words of "A Litany of Atlanta," which I had learned as a recitation, kept substituting themselves for the General Supplication. A speaker once told our small high-school assembly that we were of the "talented tenth," and somehow I remembered that the phrase was DuBois'. So, when the opportunity came to see and hear this man, I was quite as eager as my father.

I did not know what to expect. Certainly, though, a man of giant stature—not the delicately structured man that DuBois was: certainly a voice of thunder, and not merely the clear, clipped voice that DuBois had: certainly an apostolic storm of wrath (for that is the way my father read him), and not the probing, deliberate, impersonal light that DuBois' speech shed, like sparks struck off from tempered steel. I was disappointed. If my father was also, he did not tell me.

Dr. DuBois, of course, is tempered steel, and it is a matter of both character and mind. The bold outlines of his character—persistence, independence and a sort of realistic idealism—take their shape from a long line of down-East ancestors who were poor but never poverty-stricken, proud and self-contained but never self-centered. There were no particular subtleties in the characters of those ancestors; there are none in DuBois. There was nothing of radi-

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ance; nothing mercurial, magnetic, gay. There is nothing of this in DuBois either, except rarely. He is reserved, even aloof. His personality does not light up the place where he happens to be. Until he speaks on some subject that interests him, his presence in a room half full of people might go unnoticed by all save the artist, who would see the fine mold of the copper-colored features and the beautiful head.

The flexible sharpness of DuBois' mind is due, at least in part, to the circumstance and experience of growing up a Negro in New England. In Great Barrington, Massachusetts, where he was born, he could cultivate the sensitiveness of perception that a town in Georgia would have dulled. There was little to stimulate emotionalism. The problem of color had some significance for him, but the tides of race ran calmly through the valley of the Berkshires, and the young DuBois could breast them with a glorious disdain. He could be a competitor, without the beaten-in feeling of being a combatant against emotional forces too wild and unreasonable for understanding. The competition offered by his youthful associates was largely intellectual.

But the very mildness of the color problem in Great Barrington was teasing bait to DuBois' expanding mind. Whenever he went to Albany, Hartford or Providence, he got "swift glimpses of the colored world," and had veritable seizures of awareness of that world's peculiar isolation, its slave heritage, its neurotic tensions, and its precarious clutch on the soiled hem of the economy. These things showed through the bright surface beauty and edged the gaiety with the icy lace of spiritual death. DuBois came early to see the problem of color in impersonal terms as a matter of social condition, and this condition itself "as a matter of education, as a matter of knowledge; as a matter of scientific procedure in a world which had become scientific in concept."

Since before Fisk, which he entered in 1885, and through Harvard, the University of Berlin, and Harvard again, Dr. DuBois has followed "knowledge like a sinking star." Now in his eighty-first year, he is still following it—not knowledge for its own sweet sake, which is a luxury of leisure his practical idealism would scorn, but knowledge purposeful, knowledge working. The pursuit has given him one of the most catholic minds of the century. It is not a difficult mind to know.

II

It is not a difficult mind to know, for it lies exposed in a dozen major books, hundreds of editorials and articles, and a thin scattering of poems. The writings of DuBois have the lucidity of a series of anatomical drawings showing the progressive stages in the development of an organism. In this case the organism is truth—the truth of historics, which is both sociology and history. DuBois sees this truth as a tool for the better performance of the scientific task of probing and assaying "the scope of chance and unreason in human action." That he has applied it to the limited area of race relations is partly because of the traditional "specialization" of modern scholarship, and partly because doing otherwise would have meant rejection of race and a consequent upsetting of the careful balance between intellect and emotion. Even a scientist need not be a monstrosity of sheer brain supported by the dehumanized mechanism, the body.

Certainly Dr. DuBois is not. After *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, his doctoral dissertation, and *The Philadelphia Negro*, and in the midst of those Atlanta University Studies on the Negro, he published *The Souls of Black Folk*. This is perhaps as emotional and subjective a book as any written in the first decade of this century. DuBois meant it to be that way. Four times in a long career devoted principally to investigation and research in material that *is* emotional—in material upon which he was one of the first to bring to bear the scientific method—he has had to give himself a thorough emotional housecleaning. *Darkwater* is a book like *The Souls of Black Folk; The Gift of Black Folk* is another; and the novels, in a different way, are others.

What is remarkable is that these introspective sprees have come so seldom, and

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that they have not led to a pattern of introspective behavior, as with so many Negro leaders. Remarkable that his energies have not dribbled off in mere invective and condemnation, race chauvinism and apology and defense.

But the truth is that in spite of the general belief as to his purposes, DuBois' professional commitment has been to a program of "scientific investigation into social conditions, primarily for scientific ends." One who reads his chief works must be convinced that their emotional overcast is inherent in the material, and is not a quality of the treatment. For almost twenty years DuBois, alone among Negro spokesmen, believed that the basis for interracial change for the better was a knowledge of the facts and the broader truth they represented. Thirteen years of work at Atlanta University were posited upon this belief; this was at the heart of much that appeared in the *Crisis* and in *Phylon* under his editorship.

But DuBois' scientific problem has been complicated in a way unknown to most professional scholars until recently. When a group of outstanding scientists came to realize the stake they had in the future application of their knowledge, atomic physics ceased to be a scientific problem merely: it became a freighted social problem too—and the physicists were social beings! Thus it has always been with DuBois. Himself a Negro, he has been a socially responsible part of his problem; he has been concerned with the practical application of his discovered knowledge to the problem. This certainly accounts for his insistence upon a program of higher liberal education for Negroes; for his espousal of the "talented tenth" idea; for his connection with the N.A.A.C.P., and for the controversy with Booker T. Washington.

These interests and activities have been the logical consequences of DuBois' concern. Higher education, especially for the talented tenth of Negroes, meant to him the training of leaders who could guide the race to cultural fulfillment. The controversy with Booker Washington, which increased in bitterness as it lengthened in years, started because Dr. DuBois disdained the role of second class citizen which Washington thought the Negro ought to play. DuBois has believed in political action, in the black world's fighting for equality "with the weapons of Truth, with the sword of the intrepid, uncompromising Spirit." Washington, who wished the Negro to remain politically passive, was a compromiser. He deplored agitation for equal rights. He was a gradualist. DuBois has believed that the cultural contribution of the race to the nation was not less because it was different; Washington felt that the value of that contribution was doubtful. DuBois remains certain that the autocratic power bestowed upon Washington by well-meaning but misguided whites was a danger and a thwart to Negro advancement.

Finally, DuBois has believed in democracy, and his ultimate personal and spiritual commitment has been to this. He has never believed democracy impossible of attainment. As a social being, he has followed three paths that at one time or another seemed to lead to the ideal. The first, along which he started in his teaching days, was the path of objective Truth. He followed it on the assumption that once "the scientifically attested truth concerning Negroes and race relations" was realized, the world would act in accordance with the findings of science. The second was the path of Organization to propagandize and popularize the truth. This was in the early N.A.A.C.P. and the *Crisis* period. The third was the path of Security, to ensure "the survival of the Negro race" and the maintenance of its cultural advance, "not for itself alone, but for the emancipation of mankind, the realization of democracy and the progress of civilization." DuBois has gone back to the first path now, and it is likely that he will remain in it until his journey's done.

III

The mind is not always perfectly the man and the personality. In spite of the tremendous respect which his high accomplishments have earned him, Dr. DuBois is not generally liked. Many of the stories about him set him forth as a crusty, mordant-witted snob of both the intellectual

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and social varieties. He is, the stories say, a little too proud of himself. Negro and white people—and not just inconsequential people either—complain that they must be introduced to DuBois time after time, because only the fifth or sixth introduction seems to "take" with him. Many think his preference for a certain brand of expensive cigarette an affectation, and they attribute the fact that he blends and generally brews his own coffee to a desire to maintain a social distance. Just below average in height, careful, even meticulous about his personal appearance, Dr. DuBois gives some an impression of daintiness which does not fit into the popular concept either of scholar or dynamic leader. Yet it is the highest tribute, it seems to me, that even those who grumble about DuBois in this wise acknowledge that he was indubitably their chosen leader, *the* Negro leader, from 1914 until the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt. He did not seek the place of leader. His intellectual honesty, his far length of vision, and a fundamental integrity destined him to it.

As a consequence of his position, Dr. DuBois has few intimates, but these call him "Dubbie." They find him charming, witty and occasionally gay. Whatever sense of intellectual superiority he has never comes out in bombast or pomposity. When the mood strikes him, he can tell a fascinating story, though to call him a raconteur would stretch a point. His public addresses are usually brilliant and as carefully developed as works of art, but his delivery is deadpan, in-taking (as if he must reappraise his utterances), not out-giving. Because he has no oratorical flair, because he never talks down to an audience, and because audiences are what they are, he has been called a dull platform speaker. In 1931, after one of his lectures in Atlanta, where I was teaching at the time, a bright young college sophomore remarked, "The old man's lost his stride, hasn't he?" I do not remember what I answered besides the simple negative, but I know that Dr. DuBois was not old then. He is not old now. Just three years ago, when he was resettling in New York after a long absence, I heard him talk with glowing enthusiasm about the new furnishings for his apartment and about the years that lay ahead. At eighty he has still his hope and his dream, and his faith that one day truth will make men free.

Another in the series of AMERICAN SCHOLAR PORTRAITS will appear in the Summer 1948 number.

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American Scholar Forum . . .

DO SPIRITUAL VALUES REQUIRE A THEOLOGICAL BASIS?

The Spiritual Life: A Secular View

Irwin Edman

One does not have to be a studious explorer of current tendencies among historians, men of letters, and philosophical—or dialectical—theologians, to have become aware of the current renaissance of otherworldliness and supernaturalism. Not, of course, that these were ever dead. It is a familiar provincialism among rationalistic minds that what is not vital to them is dead in the world. There are millions of pious communicants, millions more of merely nominal believers, who have remained unaffected by the doubts, the scruples, the denials, and equally untouched by the affirmations of the relatively small group of secular-minded philosophers in any, even in a rationalistic era.

For a very long time, however, since Lucretius—one dares almost to say since Socrates—there have been serious and responsible thinkers who have thought it possible and necessary to speak and think of moral standards and spiritual values without recourse to the supernatural, without appeal to the sanctions of a theology or the support of a church. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, this has indeed become normal practice among liberal minds of an empirical cast. Different as was their tone, Condillac in France and Hume in England illustrated this practice and this direction in the eighteenth century. John Stuart Mill gave eloquent and succinct expression to the same secular view of moral standards and spiritual values. His essay on "Utilitarianism" and his "Three Essays on Religion" are the classical places to find it for the nineteenth century. In the twentieth

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century, Santayana has treated the same themes from a not very different point of view, and so has John Dewey, whose "A Common Faith" is a vigorous statement of what one may call secular spirituality.

But the trend, insofar at least as the general educated public is concerned, is all the other way. Mr. Toynbee has, in the United States at least, won an enormous following, largely by deriving from or (as it would seem) imposing upon history, a Christian coherence and a Christian meaning, a God-intended past and future. Mr. Reinhold Niebuhr (I apologize for trying to deal objectively and frankly with an editorial colleague) has transposed all the questions of politics and morals, about which in secular terms he often writes so empirically, into the mystical language of a sense of sin and the possibility of grace as the *sine qua non* of intelligent moral and political action.

It seems to me urgently necessary at this time to reiterate the possibility and the necessity of addressing oneself to moral and spiritual issues in secular and this-worldly terms, and this for two reasons. The first is that a physical view of nature alone is now possible to many; the second is that these can only have a notion of morals or spirit in such a context.

This is not the place to marshal all the arguments for a conception of the universe that excludes teleology and admits of no divine origin or intention in things. It can here be only briefly recalled that so far as the conclusions of empirical inquiry are concerned, there are purely statistical regularities to be observed, stable recurrences which we call laws of nature. There is at least very considerable ground, if we take the scientific method seriously, for taking a non-theological metaphysic seriously also. As a matter of fact, that is what a great many nominal believers do also. Whatever their official beliefs, their day-to-day orthodoxy, so to speak, is posited upon faith in the deliverances of scientific inquiry. For all who live consistently in terms of such an empirical world, it is very difficult to entertain seriously views which conflict with the habits of mind engendered by modern science.

To such persons, there is a danger of a very real despair, of an aching sense of futility, if they are forced into the position of believing that without a theology (in which they cannot believe), without a church (to which they cannot adhere), their moral standards, their spiritual values, their ideals are vanity and illusion, and their pretended moralities a shambles. In such blackness, some have experienced suddenly a vision of God. There are uncounted others who, if they subscribed to the theological critique of a world without God in it, while they persisted in being unable to believe in God, would have a vision only of the

> . . . dark tides of nothingness,
> Where all who know may drown.

For it is perfectly true, I think, that without something in some sense to be called spiritual, life becomes a nightmare or a nausea—or a nothingness.

Now the term spiritual has a persuasive and a glorious sound where it does not have a routine and homiletic one. By spiritual values, there is fair agreement (among men of very different cosmological convictions) that one denotes the ends which justify life, the ultimates which give life unassailable and unexpungable meaning. For thousands of years, it has been assumed in theological circles (it is largely assumed in them today) that these ultimates which give life meaning derive their sanction and their significance from a supernatural world. Men have always been diffident about trusting their finest impulses, their most elevated ideals. They have regarded their spiritual values, or been taught to regard them, as of no value whatever unless these had their sanction in a total and compelling realm of ideality. Virtually all Christian theory has held human purposes to be purposeless save in terms of one grand and inclusive total purpose. Individual lives have been the mere buzzing of complex insects, without meaning save in terms of one over-arching meaning.

Modest limited, partial meanings have been made to appear absurd. It has further been held to be a denigration of the spirit

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to assume that it is the *flowering* and the *fruition* of a fleshly creature in a physical or mechanical world that mattered. Spiritual values, it has been held, belong to spirit, and spirit, in the theological tradition of the West, is identified with a bodiless soul and a spaceless, timeless eternity. St. Paul long ago, out of Hebrew myth, provided the Christian apparatus for libeling man's once-born nature. Ever since, original sin has been invoked to explain and to contemn man's natural equipment of impulse and desire; and man's own secular efforts; even his excellences, as St. Augustine said of pagan virtues, have been at best splendid vices. It is easy, for saints as well as satirists, to pile up the evidence that man is a lustful, greedy, lying, earthbound creature, fated to live by violence and to die by damnation. On these terms, if man is to be saved, it is only by the entrance into him of divine grace, following upon his own recognition of his unworthiness. Consider Paul, Augustine, Niebuhr, and many writers less gifted but not without influence.

Not only is the individual human being condemned with the whole of human nature, but all of human history is dismissed as trivial or worse, save as the divinely arranged march of mankind toward the Kingdom of God. Otherwise, it is held that history is the record simply of the successive endings of individual lives, in themselves futile, and the final freezing or burning up of the earth or the death of the whole solar system—a sort of secular last judgment, a demonstration of the final futility of merely secular history. No less invidious things have been said about merely human standards of morality than have been uttered about attempts to define the spiritual in merely human terms. Quite apart from theology, there has been a logical uneasiness among many human beings about moral standards in a purely relative world. Theologians have jumped to insist that moral standards are hopelessly unauthoritative, if there is no absolute against which a relative standard may acquire a status. Otherwise, as Thrasymachus says in the *Republic* of Plato, "Justice is merely the right of the stronger."

To those homesick for absolutes, what the empiricist calls social utilities in morals are merely brute expediencies; customary rules of conduct never are any more than the function of the ruthless survival of coarse powers in a wretched conflict of brutal rival interests. To the theologians, not only do relative moral standards seem merely relative, they do not seem in any sense moral at all. Many men besides Immanuel Kant have been suspicious of moral claims that have no "higher" warrant than utility. Sometimes the moral character of an act dramatically illustrates to the traditional religious moralists the opposition between the moral and the useful, as in the case of group martyrdoms. (Though even the most intransigent theologians find *some* use in martyrdom, since "in the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.")

Religious traditions have alleged to provide both a rock of absolute foundation, God, and his absolute commands—those of a God so completely pure spirit that his commands have a moral quality inherent in them. They are untinctured by fleshliness, relativity or utility. Only in religion, it is argued, can morality be raised from the purely relative and the purely conventional and trivial, to the eternal, the exalted, the divinely good.

All this is familiar enough to anyone who has read Kant or St. Paul, or their current more fashionable spokesmen. It would be idle to pretend that these familiar critiques of a purely relative and purely secular morality are beneath consideration. Obviously, they would not have been considered so seriously and so long if they were. I realize, no less than the next philosopher, that very considerable ingenuity has been expended on these arguments, and that very considerable adroitness is needed even to give pause to those who hold them. But ingenuity of dialectic does not hide the questions that are begged in many theological systems, and a secular point of view depends on verifiable data rather than on fine spun dialectical demonstration.

Moreover, in addition to the impressiveness of centuries of argument, those who take a theological view of nature and man

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have a clear psychological advantage. They are effective through persuasion, not through logic alone. In the words, in the very tone of the words they use they have the winning power of centuries of accrued association, of symbols touched with age-old poetry, of familiar pieties, of the touching language of mystical devotion, of ceremonies at once elevated and rich with childhood memories.

Those, on the other hand, who have busied themselves in formulating the secular point of view, have rarely been poets and mystics, and even when they have been, they have felt that they had prior work to do. Broadly speaking, they have been intellectual entrepreneurs like Francis Bacon, or passionate assailants of religion like Lucretius, or of the church, like Voltaire. In more recent times, proponents of the secular point of view have been preoccupied either with controversial defense or attack, or with the minutiae or the drynesses of method. They have, as it were, let spiritual values go by default. They have left it to the angelic hosts, or to those who regard themselves as their agents, to have all the good songs, all the poetry of insight and idealism, of moral grandeur. Eager to avoid rhetoric, the secular-minded have forgotten the poetry of existence. The forms and images in which the spiritual life is brought home to men have been neglected in the interest of the exact formulas of understanding.

The ends and values of life are what human beings experience them to be. It would scarcely be argued seriously, save by those with a theological axe to grind, that values would be values at all, save for the human beings to whom they are values. Values valued by no one would be the square circles of morality. Certain values or goods are not altogether dissimilar from generation to generation, but are regarded as paramount and ultimate by sensitive and reflective men and women. Upon some of these the secular- and the theological-minded often seem able to agree. The theist and the atheist, for example, recognize some of the same values in the non-Christian literature and art of ancient Greece. It is not generally denied by well-read bishops that even where theological language is used in Greek tragedy, it is flexible, tentative, metaphorical. The Greek gods are forms of expression of such natural forces as any empiricist would be ready to recognize. No one in Greek literature takes the gods very literally; no one but a Thomist would confuse Aristotle's God with the Christian deity, or Plato's with that of even a liberal canon of the Church of England.

Even theologians, I take it, are prepared to admit that human beings experience in art and in life what one may call moments of secular exaltation. These need not be, and often are not, in any way connected with or dependent upon any belief in a world elsewhere, or any commitment to any theology or any communion with a church. Human beings have sacrificed themselves with sublime detachment to ideals that could not in any way, save the most metaphorical, be called supernatural. Soldiers and scientists, teachers and doctors, social workers and government officials have devoted their lives sacrificially to the good of a group or a nation or mankind—although convinced that there was no eventual kingdom of God to which all mankind is moving. Men have been known to have a saintly love of all mankind, who while they believed all men to be in their origin and their common hopes brothers, could not believe in any literal sense that they were children of God. In our own time, secular minds no less than believers, and possibly more optimistically than some of those, are concerned for the future of mankind which (should there be any future at all) would surely outlast their own short lives.

Pagans, no less than religious minds in our time, have experienced moments of sublimity—have, if one will, experienced "the sublime"—when confronted with imagined tragedy in art, or the actual tragedies of human beings in our own dreadful era, or the general human plight in any era. The beauty and the wonder of human nature have been loved by those who in no traditional sense believe in the soul or immortality. Men who do not think that in order to recognize—and forgive—human weaknesses, human beings must first be regarded simply

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as vessels of corruption, have experienced charity for human nature. Men have fought for the liberation and nurture of spiritual values without counting at all on a miracle of grace. Finally, generous minds and hearts have been able to interest themselves in the adventure of mankind, without believing that that adventure is endless, or that it adds up to a single meaning. They have felt it a sufficient challenge to action, imagination and thought, to render life as rich with meanings as possible.

All these generous aspects of the secular imagination are clearly "spiritual" in character. They have been evidences to theologians that even the conscious pagan is willy-nilly a religious creature. I think what they mean is that natural man has spiritual possibilities, and the flesh comes to spiritual fruition. Such is exactly the point of this paper. This perishing earthly creature, man, for all his lusts, confusions and weaknesses, is on occasion an artist, a hero, a saint. This is revealed unwillingly even by the most crabbed historians of mankind. But this is not to say that the hero, the artist or the saint needs a theology to explain him, or that he need have one—or that it need in either case be Christian. The values, devotion to which and absorption in which, have made the artist, the hero and the saint, are not dependent on the belief of these men in a providentially arranged system of nature or a divinely purposed march of history.

Men born to perish have given their awed allegiance, their breathless adoration, to causes and things outside themselves. Sometimes they have given them to things other human beings have made, like the plays of Shakespeare or the symphonies of Mozart. Some of them have felt as imperative an obligation to do what was helpful to their fellows as others have felt obligated to do what was commanded by God. They have rallied to movements for peace and justice, without any belief in the fatherhood of God. They have felt that men are in the same boat, though the boat has no port marked out for it, and there may be no port at all. It would, I think, be difficult to find one spiritual value or one spiritual manifestation, any moral discipline or moral standard within the domain of religious tradition, that has not equally been practiced outside the sphere of theologies and churches. Nor is there any reason to think that charity or hope, happiness or salvation, need to find their source or their support in the supernatural or in the arms of a church. Nature grows spirit as the soil grows flowers. One need not look to a world elsewhere, and the bright gleams in the clouded history of mankind are there to prove it.

The Spiritual Life: A Review of a Secular View

E. D. Myers

Twenty years ago a studious sailor asked Professor Edman how his naturalistic philosophy could ever give a comprehensive meaning to life in the way that the older theologies or metaphysical idealisms did.* Professor Edman writes as engagingly as ever; but the essential truth of religion, the relation between the self and the divine purpose, to use Mumford's words, seems still to elude him.

Most men in most times and places have been dimly aware that their experiences are of two kinds: sense experiences, as in hunger

*Cf. "The Sailor and the Life of the Spirit," in *Philosopher's Holiday* (New York, 1938).

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or pain, and value experiences, as in a feeling of remorse with its purposive accompaniment of a determination to behave differently in the future. As the neglected Paul Elmer More used to insist, any man who subjects his own experiences to an honest scrutiny will discover these two kinds for himself. A man's experiences furnish his only starting-point for his thinking about himself and the world. No other starting-point is possible, for if he tries to select another—for example, the behavior of other people or of atoms or stars—his source of knowledge is still his own experience of observing people or atoms. Moreover, that experience as such includes his own personal rational activity of interpreting.

There appear to be three possible outcomes of working inferentially from experience to a metaphysic (i.e., a "conception of the universe," or an attempt to give a rational account of the nature of things): first, an account which defines the "real" as the material, and explains away the other kind of experience as illusory or less real or as reducible to the material; secondly, an account which defines the "real" as spiritual or ideal, and explains away sense data and physical things as illusory or less real; and, thirdly, the more reasonable view, which recognizes the "reality" of both, tries to relate both (as they are related in human experience) to the permanent underlying realities of the universe. (Of course, there may be a fourth, but logically untenable, possibility: a view that starts from sense data, argues to a metaphysic that repudiates all ground for the other kind of experience, and then defines the "ultimates that give life meaning" in terms of that other kind.)

All three types of metaphysical views have appeared in Western philosophy, and each has been dominant at one time or another, although during each period when one or another view was dominant, there were serious and responsible thinkers who maintained the opposing views.

Philosophy began in the West when a few men in Greece began to doubt the myths that had been handed down by their forefathers and to ask questions about the nature of the world, their own natures, and how they ought to live. A very strong tendency to simplify explanations, to reduce the varieties of things and events to some one thing and to some one pattern, has been manifest from the first. Some of the early Greek philosophers concluded that the ultimate and primary stuff of the world was water, others that it was air or fire or atoms or mind. It was not long, however, before the main interest shifted from questions about the nature of the physical world to questions about how a man should live. The investigations of these questions entailed an analysis of man himself and a return to the questions about the world, for it was seen to be futile to discuss what a man ought to do until there was some notion of what he could do, some notion of what kind of creature he is, living in what kind of world, and of how he can know these things.

From the seventeenth century to the recent past the tendency among Western philosophers perhaps has been, as Professor Edman suggests, toward secularism, materialism, determinism—a tendency to derive from "verifiable" (sense) data an account of the universe which denies an ultimate ground for purpose, value, personality. This tendency has been manifest in other civilizations during, and especially toward the end of, their "times of troubles." An exploration of the deeper causes of the tendency would be interesting and rewarding, but beyond the scope of this essay. It should be remarked, however, and even emphasized, that when the tides of secularism and materialism have risen, the spiritual life has ebbed below the level attained at other times. In our civilization the immediate causes of the tendency were the enormous successes and the consequent prestige of the physical sciences. Philosophers, historians, men of letters and some theologians were misled by those successes into the attempt to apply the methods of the physical sciences to realms where they were not applicable.

For example, Locke, Reid, Hume and others proposed a "science of human nature" whose principles and methods they conceived on the analogy of those of the physical sciences. After several generations, their hopes for a greater understanding of

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human nature and of universal nature, for an end of philosophical debates and for final solutions of all metaphysical problems, have remained largely unfulfilled. It now seems clear that their principles were wrong and unfounded, that their method was distorted and inevitably unfruitful, and that their approach to an understanding of nature, of man and of value, leads only to a dead end.

Hence there is now, as Professor Edman also says, a renaissance. It is a renaissance of the general idea that the knowledge we get by the methods of experimental science is neither the whole nor even the most important part of our knowledge, that (quoting T. S. Eliot) "Here is a place of disaffection," that "There is, as it seems to us, at best, only a limited value in the knowledge derived from experience"—that inferences about a spiritual realm and about a supreme personality may as reasonably be drawn from man's experiences as a personality, as inferences about the sensible world may be drawn from his sense experiences; that a sufficiently exhaustive empirical survey of history discloses certain patterns but no inevitabilities; that a reasonable view of "nature" must be based on all the available "facts," and not on an arbitrary selection. It might be objected that these general ideas should not be labeled "otherworldliness and supernaturalism," but the label is significant only as it influences subsequent discussion.

Instead of hailing the renaissance of these general ideas as the beginning of a way out of the dead end, Professor Edman has urged that it is necessary to address oneself to spiritual issues in secular terms, and this for three reasons: first, for many the only possible view of nature is a physical view; secondly, these can have a notion of spirit only within the context of such a view; and, thirdly, if they are not allowed a non-theological metaphysic, they will be saddened. The "many" who would be saddened are those "whose day to day orthodoxy is posited upon faith in the deliverances of scientific inquiry, who live consistently in terms of such an empirical world." Now, as Professor Edman has himself observed, the number of the secular-minded in any age is relatively very small, and surely the number of those who live (or even think) consistently in terms of such an empirical world is even smaller. It would appear that the "urgent" necessity to secularize spiritual values derives from the wish not to sadden this few.

On this level of discussion two observations are perhaps appropriate: many more would be saddened by the secular than by the spiritual approach, and therefore the secular should be rejected; further, the thinker who grounds his faith on the deliverances of scientific inquiry and who actually lives consistently in terms of such a world (if there be any who so live) is not likely to be much affected by a theological critique of his faith. Such thinkers—for examples, orthodox Marxists of one school, and certain psychologists of our own and much earlier times—usually dismiss all such critiques as outworn superstitions, or as illusions.

On a deeper level of discussion, an analysis is required of the suggestions that "so far as the conclusions of empirical inquiry are concerned, there are purely statistical regularities, stable recurrences which we call laws of nature"; that the "secular view depends on verifiable data"; that if scientific method be taken seriously, non-theological metaphysics should be taken seriously also; that theologies are unsound because they beg questions and depend upon ingenuity and use emotive rather than informative language.

It would appear that what is meant by the phrase "empirical inquiry" is, roughly, inquiry by means of controlled laboratory and other experiments, and through the tabulation of observations. The results of these experiments and these observations are, presumably, the "verifiable data." Scientific method, again presumably, is the way in which the subjects for experiments are selected, the experiments conducted, and the observations made. Neither the inquiry nor the method can produce conclusions or a metaphysic—only an individual human personality can do this, and he can do it only by a process different from selecting and experimenting. The process by which he draws conclusions and formulates laws al-

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ways involves, among other things, making assumptions and having presuppositions. As A. E. Taylor has pointed out, any claim to formulate a law on the basis of verified data assumes that the selected few facts constitute a fair "sample" not only of the vast unexplored past and present, "but also of the necessarily unexplorable future."

When we go on to ask about the basis of the assumption that the scientist makes, we find no less a scientist than Whitehead answering that the confidence of European science in the intelligibility of the world "must come from the medieval insistence on the rationality of God, conceived as with the personal energy of Jehovah and with the rationality of a Greek philosopher." That confidence of the scientist—as of the theologian or layman—is a part of the intellectual temper, the climate of belief, from which the modern physical sciences have arisen; this general principle of the "uniformity of nature" was, and remains, an assumption. It is an unprovable assumption, for any attempted proof of the principle can offer already observed statistical regularities as a fair sample of the whole only by assuming that the whole is uniform. This assumption, at the time of the beginnings of modern science, was based on the belief in the rationality of God and, since the beginnings, no other basis has been offered. Thus it would seem clear that at least one of the fundamental postulates of modern scientific inquiry is derived from a personalistic theology. And thus to posit one's faith in the "deliverances" of that inquiry is to overlook both its basic assumption and the fact that the inquiry is into one type of experience only. This is a logical *tour de force* and a metaphysical absurdity.

The theology of the time of the beginnings of modern scientific inquiry held that God is righteous as well as rational, and from this was derived another fundamental belief: that there is an immutable law of right and wrong. There is no space here to develop the argument, but we should at least notice Taylor's suggestion that the denial of an immutable ethical law and of divine purpose probably logically involves the denial of *any* pattern or coherence in nature; that there is probably no middle ground between a complete irrationalism and the genuine rationalism of a belief in moral law and purpose and God.

As to the regularities and recurrences which we call laws of nature, so long as the term "law" is confined to this sense, it is merely a record of observed events and suggests nothing in answer to the question why the events exhibit a pattern or uniformity. But few scientists and, perhaps, fewer philosophers, have so confined the meaning of the term. The tendency has been, and is, to go on to speak of nature as "governed" by these laws, thus implying that the "law" somehow explains as it records, that it furnishes a basis for prediction. But law as record cannot do this; only an assumption of future regularities can, and this assumption is quite different from scientific method and empirical inquiry. Hence, there is none whose "day to day orthodoxy is posited upon faith in the deliverances of scientific inquiry," for scientific inquiry makes no deliverances; the faith is and must be in the validity of the assumption of regularity: a theological assumption.

Almost everyone would rightly grant that scientific method should be taken seriously in its place; but to apply it, or conclusions derived from it, to realms of thought and experience beyond the bounds of the physical sciences is bad logic, bad practice and very bad metaphysics. When, for example, the "empirical inquirer" asserts that there is no satisfactory evidence in all the observations of the behavior of atoms and molecules and stars that God exists, that human personalities are free and that they survive death—the assertion may be respectfully heard. But if he goes on to assert that God does not exist, that freedom is an illusion, and that human personality cannot survive death, he is making assumptions to which his "verifiable data" are irrelevant, and is talking very bad metaphysics.

As over against the irrationalism of the secularist, we may set the more reasonable view which is clearly aware of the two kinds of human experience, recognizes the "reality" of both, and tries to relate both to the permanent underlying realities of the

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universe. In this latter view, purpose in man is one of the data taken as the starting-point, and so are value experiences, "moments of exaltation" and the like. From these and other data the careful philosopher works out to a conception of the universe which, finding purpose in man, infers a ground for it in the universe; which, seeing divinity in man, infers a source of it; which, knowing himself to be a personality, derives it from a supreme personality. No doubt, such a philosopher fails to offer final and convincing "proof" of his conclusions; no doubt, he occasionally begs questions; and no doubt, his language has at times been more than purely informative. But surely he can justly say to his opponents: *De te fabula.* And surely his starting-point and his conclusions are more adequate and more reasonable than those of his opponents, who begin by arbitrarily excluding most data and end by denying all ground for the very experiences that they value most.

"Nature grows spirit as the soil grows flowers" is an interesting but oddly ambiguous metaphor. The soil grows no flowers unless the seeds of the flowers are put into it, and nothing but other flowers can produce the seeds. Physical nature grows no spirit save as the seeds of the spirit are put into it, and nothing but spirit can produce the seeds. If the metaphor be understood to mean, in Keats's phrase, that this world is the "vale of soul-making," it is significant and illuminating: the universe as a whole includes a source of purpose and divinity and personality, and this world is the place where those values are nurtured and developed. But if it be understood to mean that there is no ultimate reason why a man should more appropriately give his "breathless adoration" to the plays of Shakespeare than to those of Noel Coward, to the music of Mozart than to that of Carrie Bond, no reason for his giving his "awed allegiance" to a movement for peace and not to a movement for the dominance of a master race or for the dictatorship of the proletariat, then the metaphor is significant but dreadful and obscuring.

One need not look to a world elsewhere; but one must look at the whole of this world and to the bright gleams for what they are: evidences of things hoped for. Perhaps the issue is between a faith founded on a reasonable interpretation of all the experiences of man, and one founded on a short view of a fraction of those experiences.

The question of the studious sailor is still unanswered.

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The Reader Replies . . .

The Reader Replies *regularly carries comments by readers on the contents of the preceding American Scholar Forum. In the Spring number, for example,* The Reader Replies *will contain letters about the debate in the current number on the subject: "Do Spiritual Values Require a Theological Base?" In addition, miscellaneous letters of comment on various articles appear in this department. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *5 East 44 Street, New York 17, N. Y., and should not exceed 300 words in length. Hitherto, we have not refused to print longer comments, but the volume of letters has increased to such a degree that it is now necessary to insist on the 300 word maximum. The only exceptions will be comments on the previous Forum. Because of limitations of space, the editors cannot guarantee to print all communications received. Letters intended for publication in the Spring number should be mailed before December 15. (Editor)*

IS OUR PATENT SYSTEM OBSOLETE?

Not Patents, but the Patent System

There is no possibility of avoiding, sidestepping or gainsaying the huge mass of evidence that has been piled up in recent years to the effect that "assignment" and "licensing" of patents nullifies the intent of the original drafters of our basic patent law. Nor, as Mr. Hamilton points out, have the siftings, slow adaptations, and contrivances to improve the law, served materially to improve the situation in any fundamental sense. On the contrary, since the law has become for that very "big business" which Mr. Ooms believes to be "an inevitable evil to be jealously watched and circumscribed," an abiding aid and comfort, it falls into the class, not of refresher and stimulator of new and small enterprise, but of man-trap and head-hunter of the same. Mr. Ooms has misunderstood the question. The point being argued was not "patents," but the "patent system." Hence he does not even touch upon Mr. Hamilton's case.

How can the evidence submitted by the Temporary National Economic Committee be answered? Or that of the Anti-Trust Division? In the Hartford-Empire and Owens-Illinois cases, patents were used to buttress virtually every device for circumventing the purpose and intent of the anti-trust laws. The same holds for the optical glass case and the synthetic rubber patents. Furthermore, it would require rather more than twenty years of Rip Van Winkle oblivion to events of this world, to miss the fact that the overwhelming proportions of the *significant* inventions now come out of scientific laboratories, and that these, public or private alike, are institutions which have

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largely if not wholly removed—by deliberate intent, in order to promote the work, as Mr. Kettering of General Motors Corporation once testified—the pecuniary reward for the inventor. As for the power, public or private, which supplies the funds, it knows that a patent without the basic "know-how" of industry is essentially worthless. Reform of the patent system is long since overdue.

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An Historical Moment

Mr. Hamilton's article patently brands its author as one wholly out of contact with the practical problems of science and industry, and their selfish but enlightened efforts "to promote the progress of science and useful arts." It impresses one largely as a skillful exercise in semantics based on a reading acquaintance with the subject.

The article is premised upon a number of fundamental misconceptions which render its conclusions valueless. The most important of these fallacies is that each patent should inevitably promote the progress of its particular art to the maximum degree *during its lifetime of seventeen years*. Nothing could be further from the truth. The patent laws contemplate a long-term secular progress of the art, and the price which the public pays is a seventeen-year incubation period for each invention, during which the progress as represented by that particular invention may be limited while the inventor (or his financial backer) struggles to reap some reward from his travail. *This seventeen-year period is but an historical moment.* Consider the thousands of now commonplace articles marketed freely by many competitors, but originally the subject of a controlling patent—aspirin, barbed wire, electric lamps, sewing machines, to mention but a few. In fact, the common articles of commerce once covered by dominating patents, now long since expired, throng every market place.

Another serious misconception in Mr. Hamilton's article is that the mass of judicial decisions interpreting the patent laws has distorted the basic patent principles enunciated in the Constitution, while in fact they represent merely the evolutionary amplification of such principles to adapt them to the ever-changing social and economic conditions.

Still another misconception in the article is that pure and abstract invention alone is adequate to promote the progress of science, etc. In fact, invention is only one of several essential ingredients of such progress. Among other essentials are promotion or venture capital, management, labor, etc. Together, they comprise business, which seems so odious to Mr. Hamilton.

The article also contains a number of serious contradictions. In one breath it states that the original system of patent laws devised by the Founding Fathers has persisted as an anachronism, while in the next breath it brands that system as "the most brilliant and ingenious of modern inventions—the creation of its own beneficiaries."

But the most serious weakness of Mr. Hamilton's thesis is that it contains no *factual* basis indicating that our patent system actually fails to promote the progress of science and the arts or to benefit the public—its ultimate objective. The evidence is all to the effect that it does. As was concluded by the National Patent Planning Commission (established by Executive Order No. 8977 of December 12, 1941, by the late President Roosevelt) after extensive investigations and hearings,

> The strongest industrial nations have the most effective patent systems, and after a careful study, the Commission has reached the conclusion that the American system is the best in the world.

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Patents and Cartels

The international aspects of the patent system should be emphasized by all those who, like Dr. Hamilton, regard it as the slave of an "alien master." For the latter is

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likely to take the form of an American corporate monopoly cooperating with a foreign cartel to the detriment of the interests of the United States.

This country, in two world wars against Germany, has found its productive capacity hamstrung by secret German influence, especially in the chemical and metallurgical industries. This influence was exerted largely through patent rights. Shortages in magnesium, aluminum, atabrine, synthetic rubber and other war materials were traced directly to illegal restrictive patents, and their related cartel agreements between such German companies as the I. G. Farbenindustrie and such American concerns as DuPont and Standard Oil of New Jersey. These agreements were used to hamper American defense preparations, and even to facilitate and finance propaganda and espionage for the German trusts which were the backbone of the Nazi regime.

During the war itself, Standard Oil, for example, in effect collaborated with the enemy, when it claimed to own certain patents which were in reality the property of I. G. Farben. The U.S. government, fortunately, seized all the Jersey Standard patents which it had reason to believe were the faintly-disguised property of Farben. The main consideration now should be to prevent these patents from getting back into the hands of, or being used by, international cartels—some of which seem to be coming to life again with the aid of the pulmotor of American finance capital.

These patents should obviously be made freely available to all U.S. industries, regardless of size and capitalization. They should not be kept as a monopoly by German companies, even though such companies are supposedly taken over by "trustworthy" U.S. companies, as after World War I. That is the way I. G. Farben achieved effective control, and later reached the position that proved so dangerous to the defense and security of the people of the United States.

Robert W. Dunn
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The Bigger Issue

The most convincing way of appraising the value of an institution is to put it to test. Such decisive proof by means of experience is offered by the American patent system in the one hundred and fifty-eight years of its existence. It has spelled out for this country a tremendous upgrowth of science and practical arts, a towering economic position, and an unrivaled high standard of living. Other nations, with similar natural resources and even greater numerical wealth of potentially creative manpower, hardly reach the level of human essentials and minimum comfort. It is significant that they have no patent system.

Mr. Ooms set forth in detail the benefits of patents, both for the single inventor and the public at large. Occasional monopolistic abuses, like any intemperance breeding in boundless freedom, are properly checked by the voice of judicial authority. Mr. Hamilton sees only immoderation and excess, warranting eviction of the patent system from the soil of the American economy.

It seems to the writer that the hub of the controversy resides in the fundamental approach to economy as a philosophic concept. The patent system in its viable form is anchored in the general principle of free enterprise, which charters our entire economic life. It is accordingly inconsistent to restrain free interchange of incorporeal property like patent rights, while simultaneously upholding unconditional freedom in moving corporeal and capitalistic interests; it is no less unfair in the face of the big financial efforts invested at great risk in scientific research. Singling out the patent system as a target of criticism just evades the bigger issue of free play vs. coercion in our economic order. The tenet of free enterprise is indivisible, and he who disowns it anywhere can no longer draw arbitrary lines between different but closely connected spheres of economic activities. *Ubi eadem ratio, ibi eadem lex:* Where the same reason obtains, there the same law prevails.

I. J. Fellner
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Charles City, Iowa

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Reversing the Complaint

The article by Walton Hamilton displays the author's complete lack of understanding of the realities of the patent system. For example, he states that "an umbrella patent is written in terms broad enough to cover any invention within its shadow."

The author overlooks the fact that a patent can only describe an invention. The scope and breadth of a patent is inherently restricted by the extent of the new principle or new feature of the invention which the patent seeks to cover. The Patent Office is composed principally of a large body of experienced experts, and their primary occupation is the examination and review of applications for patents. These experienced experts examine each application in the light of the record of all previous work in the same field. They restrict each patent to those features which the applicant has contributed, and compel each applicant to describe his invention in terms which accurately measure the contribution which he has made.

Obviously, if a patent issued only after this examination and review by the Patent Office is infringed upon by a subsequent worker in the same field, it is only because the subsequent worker is employing the invention disclosed by the patent, and is invading the field in which the patentee, by virtue of his patent, holds a temporary monopoly.

The erroneous nature of Mr. Hamilton's arguments about the patent system are emphasized by a recent article in a leading chemical journal by a man who is the head of a research laboratory and has had practical experience in patent matters. In his article, he complained of the difficulty of securing adequate patent protection for inventions in the chemical field. He points out that the requirements of the Patent Office are so stringent and so exacting, that frequently a patent of sufficient scope to be of practical benefit cannot be secured without providing the Patent Office with data and information which can only be obtained by laboratory work involving prohibitory expense. He further states that under the circumstances he has been compelled to advise clients not to seek patent protection, to abandon applications which they have filed, and to practice their inventions as trade secrets.

As this authority points out, the policy of practicing inventions as trade secrets and not patenting them means that "discoveries are withheld from industry and from the body of technical knowledge." This is the opposite of the purpose of the patent system, which is to encourage the disclosure of discoveries and to add to the body of technical knowledge.

This authority's remarks show that the patent system, instead of stifling industry by creating improper monopolies, as asserted by Mr. Hamilton, frequently fails to offer inventors enough to encourage them to make their discoveries known to the public.

A. L. Jerome
Koppers Company, Inc.
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"You Can't Skin a Live Tiger..."

The danger in discussing needed changes in democracy's handling of science and patents is that the issue tends to be talked down to the level of small changes designed to remedy single aspects of "abuses," one at a time. Thus Mr. Ooms pleads the desirability of society's "slowly adapting [such instruments as its patent laws] to its needs by the day-to-day decision of its courts, occasionally confining them by statutory controls." Not only does this make little issues out of big ones, but it also shunts the issue away from the advanced power strategy of capitalist business into the allegedly controlling sphere of democracy, in which we are encouraged to believe that all good things can be achieved in their proper time. And, once this shunting process begins, one can invoke all manner of shoddy devices, such as blaming the "inhibitions of bureaucracy" as the culprit—as though the "depressing formalism" of our handling of patents were not overwhelmingly the result of the shrewd, meticulous tactics of corporation lawyers.

The problem we face today is that, in an era that increasingly lives by science and

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technology, business control over science and its application to human needs, gives to private business effective control over all the institutions of democracy, including the state itself. Monograph 26 of the Temporary National Economic Committee, "Economic Power and Political Pressures" (pp. 22-23), states this fatal impasse of American democracy as follows:

> The control over applied science which business holds is the key to the explanation of its dominant position in the process of government. . . .
>
> To a great extent industry's political formidability can be traced to its dominant position in scientific research. . . .
>
> The controls centralized in the business community extend to both pure and applied science. It is the domination in both fields which gives business its key position. No other group, not even government, controls and enjoys this asset to the same extent. It is a resource of the first magnitude, endowing business with unique influence in the social process, and making its political strength almost unassailable.

What this means is that private economic power has already double-locked its political power over our society by fencing off all relevant areas of science. Such a situation is not one that Congress is likely to change. Those who would change it by slow day-by-day alterations of an adaptive character overlook the solid fact that "you can't skin a live tiger one paw at a time."

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The Alarming Concentration of Economic Power

Mr. Ooms devotes, according to a rough calculation I have just made, approximately 28 per cent of his space to a metaphorical worrying of his problem, in which, among other things, the framing of the patent system turns out to be no less ponderable than the miracle of life itself. This is rather heady company for the system to keep, and methinks Mr. Ooms protesteth too much. The issue is not, as Mr. Ooms is led to imply at one point, whether man is made obsolete by the failure of one of his tools. The issue is touched further on, where Mr. Ooms says "the public is heir to the entire estate." If this is indeed true, then Mr. Ooms wins, and may be forgiven all those metaphors.

But it is hard to know what to say when, in speaking of the content of this estate, Mr. Ooms gives emphasis to "the blessings of an economy in which even the small may survive" and to the "armor" that the patent system provides "to the newly-born enterprise against the formidable superiority of established business." Of such should the estate be constituted, but Mr. Ooms is kidding either the public or himself when he says the public is getting this.

I learn from a fascinating volume entitled *The Cravath Firm* that Mr. Paul D. Cravath, speaking in 1929 to the subject "Is Big Business a Menace?" "surprised his listeners with the answer: 'Of course it is. It is perhaps the most serious menace of our age in its social consequences upon American life.'" Mr. Cravath, eminent counsel during his lifetime for many contesting heirs to the blessings of the economy, did not surprise his listeners with his analysis of those strains in the American character which made for Big Business; but its menace, and hence its notable growth, he frankly recognized.

This was some ten years before the extensive hearings of the Temporary National Economic Committee, which put so many examples of the menace, and so many instances of the abuse, of the patent system upon the record, that it is meaningless to cite any of them; nor is it necessary, for the volumes of those hearings are very well known. And these hearings preceded by ten years the report of the Federal Trade Commission of July, 1948, written in words as desperate as the language of bureaucracy provides:

> . . . if nothing is done to check the growth of concentration, either the giant corporations will ultimately take over the country, or the Government will be impelled to step in and impose some form of direct regulation in the public interest. . . . Either this country is going down the road to collectivism or it must stand and fight for competition. . . . Crucial in that fight must be some means of preventing giant corporations from steadily increasing their power at the expense of small business.

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As Justices Black, Douglas, Murphy and Rutledge said in their interesting dissent in the recent Columbia Steel case: "We have here the problem of bigness. Its lesson should by now have been burned into our memory by Brandeis. . . ." I am sure that Mr. Ooms is familiar with all this, and more besides. But where is the knowledge apparent in what he has written? Doesn't his memory burn even a little?

Abuses of the patent system may not indeed be held primarily responsible for the alarming concentration of economic power in this country, although they have assuredly contributed to it. Since the system's function is to do the very opposite, it would seem that the patent armor is either very low-grade in construction or, like other armor, no match for the techniques of present-day aggression. A good part of it was shot away, in fact, twenty-two years ago, by the decision in the famous General Electric case, which held price-fixing combinations lawful when the property involved was a patent. That was one of the adaptations of which Mr. Ooms speaks; in effect it made the inventor's reward the prime aim of the patent system, which is so far from Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 of the Constitution, that "obsolete" seems a mild word.

Professor Hamilton, I think, gives a reasoned and readable statement about what's happened to the patent system, but one which also seems to suggest a kind of indifference to his opponent's case. This could well come from confidence in the merits of his own, but the subject is too urgent for confidence. It is, in fact, too urgent for the subject of this forum. I propose that THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR have another forum on the question, "What Can We Do to Bring Our Patent System Up to Date?"

Dexter W. Masters
Consumers Union of the U.S.
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Inherently Sound and Sufficiently Flexible

No one can logically contend that the present patent statutes spell out a perfect document, or that the patent system, as it now exists, serves the public interest in the best possible manner consistent with the aims of its founders. It is understandable that this system, being man-made, is something less than perfect. But it should not be condemned *in toto* and scrapped, merely because we have neglected during the past hundred years to effect the changes necessary for the most efficient continuance of its basic purpose of promoting the progress of science and useful arts.

The original statutes were necessarily drafted in the light of conditions prevailing at that time. It was, as Mr. Hamilton points out, the era of the solo inventor. The framers, however, with commendable foresight, provided the rudiments of a system inherently sound and sufficiently flexible to be adaptable to the changing tempo of future eras. It is remarkable that the basic statutes have continued to justify their existence through more than a century of progress, from the era of the individual inventor until the present time, when the complexities of industrial progress have necessitated that an ever-increasing emphasis be placed upon the contribution of the corporate inventor. If teamwork of a corps of workers having at their command laboratory facilities which only corporate enterprise can provide, is necessary to expand the horizons of human accomplishment, the benefit to the public is just as great, and the reward possible under our patent system is as justified, as if the same result were eventually effected by individual inventors.

This shift in emphasis has not swerved the system from its intended orbit. The contribution of the system must be measured in terms of result. So judged, the conclusion is inescapable that it should be maintained as a vital element in our economic structure.

J. H. Merchant, Editor-in-Chief
Journal of the Patent Office Society
Washington 4, D. C.

Two Further Difficulties

Dr. Hamilton, in my opinion, has the better of the argument. My own experience as an inventor and expert witness in patent litigation and in business organizations leads

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me to suggest that there are two difficulties, in addition to those mentioned by Dr. Hamilton, which are inherent in our patent system.

The first is that a patent litigation may be, and often is, brought before a Federal judge who is not only ignorant of the rudiments of the art involved in the case, but may also be unfamiliar with patent law and what is patentable subject matter. The government does not provide the Federal Courts with funds to hire an expert as a "friend of the court" to assist in evaluating the testimony of the witnesses, and consequently the bases of many decisions are weak, and the decisions of the courts in different districts often conflicting. Since the commercial value of a patent is very uncertain until it has been adjudicated, the inventor is often confronted with expensive litigation before he can realize on his invention.

The second difficulty is, that should an inventor develop a profitable though small business in the manufacture and sale of his invention, he may have to defend, often at ruinous expense, an infringement suit not always brought in good faith. Such suits often compel him to sell out to the largest competitor. Again, since the distributor of an invented product is also subject to infringement suits, a large corporation can easily ruin a small manufacturer by threatening the distributor of his products.

Our patent system is obsolete in many particulars, and its administration should be reorganized. The tools of the new administration should be forged by those who have both the scientific skill and the social vision to discern the particulars needed to carry out the intentions of the patent system as a means of encouraging the development of the arts.

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The Corporations as Beneficiaries

In his day, Abraham Lincoln could well say that "the patent system added the fuel of interest to the power of genius." Today it would be more correct to say that the patent system adds another instrument of control to the well-stacked arsenal of monopoly interests. The original constitutional stipulation that the purpose of patents was "to promote science and the useful arts," and George Washington's sponsorship of patents to give "effectual encouragement . . . to the exertion of skill and genius" have little meaning under modern industrial capitalism. It is the corporations, not their scientists, that are the beneficiaries of patent privileges. Genius is not nourished, for when the research worker joins the staff of an industrial laboratory, he relinquishes his right to patent the fruits of his researches to the corporation which employs him. If on the other hand, he remains a member of that almost extinct tribe of solo inventors, he is usually powerless to compete with the industrial giants that control credit, technological facilities and the markets, and he is generally unable to develop his patent in the face of the expenses of infringement suits.

The ramifications of the use of patents as instruments of corporate control have become extraordinarily devious, as testimony before the Senate Patent Committee and the Temporary National Economic Committee by the staff of the anti-trust division of the Department of Justice has amply proved. There was inserted in the record, for example, that revealing documentary indiscretion of the Hartford Empire Company, an engineering concern engaged in making glass containers, which read:

> In taking out patents we have three main purposes—(a) to cover the actual machines which we are putting out to prevent the duplication of them . . . (b) to block the development of machines which might be constructed by others for the same purpose as our machines, using alternative means . . . (c) to secure patents on possible improvements of competing machines, so as to "fence in" those and prevent them from reaching an improved stage.

There is little that is reminiscent of the intention "to promote science and the useful arts" in this statement of policy. Nor is there in the testimony which revealed that in many industries there were under way

(continued on page 128)

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UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

Judgment Day Comes Once an Aeon

These lines are written before the national election, and will appear after it. I have, or ought to have, a feeling, therefore, that much of what I am thinking now or saying now will be quite invalid when the election is over. Certain future widely publicized dates always seem final and decisive. They appear as dividing lines between two epochs, final demarcations of the Era Before and the Era After. It used to amuse schoolboys—it doubtless still does—to imagine somebody dating a letter 51 B.C. But even the day after the birth of Christ (if it is not irreverent to say so)—that day itself must have been a very ordinary one in the life of the average citizen of the ancient world. The morning after the burning of Joan of Arc, the routine business of life must have gone on. Afterwards usually seems at least superficially about the same as did before.

Meanwhile, there are days that mark genuine revolutions in history—days like the birth of Christ or His Crucifixion—however little stir they created in their contemporary world. It would be convenient if days that were genuinely decisive could clearly be labeled as such. It would be pleasant, on some golden August morning, to know that this was the beginning of a new age in the world, or on a gray November afternoon, when everything seemed endlessly recurrent, to know that something basically new had happened in our time.

"It is the beginning of the Age of Joy," one might some morning be informed crisply by the news announcer. "It is reported at Oslo that permanent peace has broken out." One wouldn't believe it, really; one has heard too many days labeled as decisive. This is it, it is said, and it repeatedly is not. It recurrently is not anything.

Whence this habit of looking forward to days of destiny? It is a habit carried over, probably, from childhood, this expectation of *the* crucial day: graduation from grade school, the day one became an Eagle Scout, one's twelfth birthday ("You're a little man now"). But these days come and go, and it is the same world essentially, with the same people in it. History is much less given to crucial days than are school calendars.

It is good for our sense of proportion to become, or to come to know, astronomers. Watchers of the skies live imaginatively among vast times and distances; the crises they note are millions of years apart; only once in a very great human while do they discover a comet or a planet. The Day of Judgment does not come every day, however much the Angel Gabriel, as in Marc Connally's *The Green Pastures*, sits eagerly polishing up his horn.

Au Petit Bonheur

Doubtless certain expressions in a foreign language, even ones quite familiar, have a certain freshness and pathos that they cannot possibly have to their native user. I am quite confident that no Frenchman would or could have had quite the same feeling that I had when I recently saw in France—over a little shop selling miscellaneous gifts and souvenirs—the sign, "Au Petit Bonheur." Certainly the meditation it induced had little to do with the costume jewelry, the pocketbooks, the cigarette lighters on display to catch the pennies of tourists in the Riviera resort village where I saw them.

How suggestive a phrase, I found myself thinking. The little happiness, the minor felicity, the modest joy. . . . Moralists are always talking of the grand and comprehensive happiness. Even Aristotle, a notably sober and sensible man, insists that happiness can only be conceived of in the long view, and perhaps cannot be attributed safely to anyone until his life is over. The poets, too, when they speak of felicity, usually think of it in rather grandiose terms. It is a beatitude, it is eternal, it is Heaven—or near it. And to the romantic imagination,

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joy is always conceived of as a great joy, an altitude, an ecstasy, a forever.

Well, the way things are going in the world—the way, one might say, that they have always gone—it might be well to settle for the small happiness, the little joy. I think Montaigne would have been on my side, and Epicurus and Ecclesiastes—the last named because he was quite despairing of any long or large felicity. The French have always specialized in the *petit bonheur:* the small omelette, the little wine, the intimate foyer of enjoyment. The English have celebrated it, too. Austin Dobson was one of the prophets of this moderate aspiration:

> Here in this sequestered close,
> Bloom the hyacinth and rose.

Rupert Brooke, homesick for Grantchester, the tranquil village near Cambridge, asked:

> Is the church clock at ten to three,
> And is there honey still for tea?

And the small pleasures that make a tempered happiness persisted in an older Germany, long after that unhappy land had gone in for bigness and empire.

Is it sour grapes to settle for *le petit bonheur:* to aim to make happiness out of the most modest ingredients: little things lovingly collected, simple meals in modest surroundings with unpretentious friends, discoursing, perhaps, on not too grand ideas? Is the little happiness cherishable only because as one grows older, neither private ecstasy nor public utopias seem any longer feasible? Do we tell ourselves the unspectacular moments satisfy only because all moments are threatened, because even gentle goods—like honey for tea in England—cannot be taken for granted any longer? How many millions in the world would now compound for the *petit bonheur!* Included among those millions, no doubt, the readers of this meditation—and its author.

Sincerity as a Fine Art

I remember often during my early adolescence listening to older people making conversation. I vowed I would never willingly be a conspirator at such transparent hypocrisies. When *I* went out to dinner, I found myself saying, I should speak only when I felt like it, and I should say only what was on my mind. I used to listen while my elders pretended to have a fascinated interest in visitors with whom I knew they had only the most remote concern, and hear them discuss with affected animation matters that I knew bored them to pain. I remember having had it explained to me that this was the least that good manners demanded. It was at this moment that I came to the conclusion that good manners and dubious morals had much in common.

In these matters, I have become subdued to the general color of civilized society. It has long ago been brought home to me that a guest has obligations in addition to that of eating the food provided by his host. It is fair enough that one should, if not sing, at least converse for one's supper. I have even come to believe that my elders of long ago were more interested in their visitors than I had supposed. I have lighted upon the fact that questions asked out of politeness may elicit answers that are fascinating on their own. A fascinating story may be the unearned increment of a conventional inquiry.

And yet I have not ceased to be troubled at the momentum with which on a social occasion one is embarked on a brief career of insincerity. I have found myself expressing opinions on Russia or on psychiatry that I had not known I possessed. I have sometimes, out of sheer inability to get out of it, maintained a position on old-age security, or on old age itself, that, save for some impulsive remark I had let fall, I should not have considered it a point of honor to defend as my considered philosophy on the subject. On shamefully numerous occasions, I have repeated an anecdote by which I was myself bored to death. I have talked with dowagers about literature, art and education, at moments when all three of these lofty themes seemed to me insufferably tedious and stuffy.

I have come to admire those sturdy individualists who say—as I once planned to do—only whatever comes into their minds, and speak only when they are spoken to,

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and perhaps not even then. But I must admit I find them difficult socially, these high-minded boors who can be pricked into only the most minimal of replies, these dedicated roughnecks who find a savage pleasure in telling you without compromise what they think of everything, including your loyalties and your enthusiasms—and possibly yourself.

There must be some way of acting both agreeably and sincerely. It is a fine art, practiced, one is told, by a few witty eighteenth-century courtiers. But wits today are rather celebrated for their malignity. It is a difficult alternative, that between truth and charm, and I confess that I am tempted to take the easier and more genial path. If one plumped for sincerity, one would get to be known simply as a bear, a bear who would soon be walking alone, a boorish bear who at any rate would seldom be invited out to dinner. As Santayana remarks somewhere, "For a man of sluggish mind and bad manners, there is decidedly no place like home."

First They Suffer, Then They Sing

"Great art can only come from suffering," said the eminent art dealer, as he lit his cigar after the sumptuous lunch in the home of our wealthy and connoisseur host. He was a man of some taste as well as shrewdness, and he knew a good deal about the value of a work of art, as well as its price. He had been, I had been told, something of a romantic poet in his youth, and at sixty he still looked the after-image of the part, a thin, "spiritual," finely cut face, a slim body, meditative eyes, delicate hands.

"Don't *you* think that all great art must come from suffering?" he asked, turning to me, who was sitting on the drawing room couch beside him.

"No, I don't," I said. "I think that's a conventional sentimental illusion."

"Ah, no," the art dealer sighed, "it isn't. Take Michelangelo, take Dante, take Beethoven, take El Greco, take Keats, take Baudelaire, take Rimbaud."

"Hold on!" I said. "Take—" . . . and then I could not think of my happy artist in any era of any of the arts.

"You see," said the art dealer.

"Oh, but yes I can," I said triumphantly. "Benvenuto Cellini. He seemed to do all right, and to feel he was doing all right, and if you will give me time I'll think of some others."

"I don't think you'll find any," said the art dealer. "Remember, even when an artist seems happy in terms of external conditions, there is an inner misery." He put his hand on his heart. "One never knows. Often an artist completely conceals his suffering from the world, but it is privately there. Abolish misery, and I promise you art will disappear."

"Yes," I said, putting as much irony into my tone as I could, "there is something in what you say. And if there is, I think several important things follow. We must give up all improvement of the condition of the poor. We can't afford to lose the chance of developing some first-rate poverty-stricken artists. It's going to be pretty difficult, with old-age security and all that; it's up to the government to arrange that a few chosen, gifted persons each year be made to do without adequate shelter or leisure or food. We must see that their families are half-starving, and, if possible, give the artist an incurable, or, at the very least, a painful disease. Even if we allow him to be healthy and comfortable, and perhaps even give him a little time for his work, we must be sure he does not go to a psychiatrist to be cured of his inward miseries. We must keep him from marrying if he is in love, possibly by arranging that his love be unrequited, or by doping him up so that he cannot fall in love at all, and is therefore still more miserable. We must make it impossible for him to obtain a divorce if he is unhappily married. We must teach his children to be unfilial, and alienate from him all his friends. We must not allow him a moment of pure joy."

"I should not go quite that far," said the art dealer, a little taken aback by what he took to be my sudden conversion, "but you get my point. For the present there is still enough misery in the world without the necessity of its being arranged by the state."

"Good!" I said. "Then art is safe for some time to come."

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The Revolving Bookstand

God, Existentialism and the Novel

John Cournos

The Heart of the Matter, by Graham Greene. New York: The Viking Press. 1948. 306 pp. $3.00
Brideshead Revisited, by Evelyn Waugh. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1945. 351 pp. $2.50
The Age of Reason, by Jean-Paul Sartre. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 397 pp. $3.00
The Reprieve, by Jean-Paul Sartre. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 445 pp. $3.00
The Blood of Others, by Simone de Beauvoir. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1948. 292 pp. $3.00
The Plague, by Albert Camus. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1948. 278 pp. $3.00
Ape and Essence, by Aldous Huxley. New York: Harper and Bros. 205 pp. $2.50

At the moment these lines are being penned the four books which lead the best sellers in fiction are: Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, Waugh's *The Loved One*, Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, and Cronin's *Shannon's Way*. Trailing not far behind is Camus' *The Plague*. Now that is a strange thing: all these novels are deadly serious, and deal in greater or lesser measure with fundamental matters. Their authors deal with life and death, with God and moral values—above all, with *responsibility*. It is, perhaps, a sign of the times that not only do our leading practitioners of fiction choose to write on these matters, but that the majority of fiction readers prefer to read them. This mood is due, of course, to two World Wars and the Depression—and the atom bomb has not fallen on Hiroshima for nothing. The world is holding its breath, is asking: What next? What to think? What to be? What to do? How to behave?

Another noteworthy thing about these new schools of fiction is the almost total absence of romance. Still another is that though they deal weightily with ideas and problems, they do not—not a single one of them—condescend to the status of propaganda or tracts. They are legitimate novels in that their main functions are to delineate character, to tell a story, yes, even to entertain. For scarcely one of them but holds you in suspense, working on the reader's emotions until the grand climax is reached, by means of a technique and a craft commensurate to the nuances as well as the emotional nature of the fictional art.

One of the authors, indeed—I refer to Graham Greene—made his first reputation with semi-mystery and gangster novels, with his mastery of suspense, and he has had some movie experience. On top of that, he has made some deep penetrations into psychological themes, and into the realm of the sinister. He has an uncanny gift for the precise; he never overwrites. It is necessary, for very good reasons, to state that he is a convert to Catholicism. If all art is combination, the successful welding of component parts into a new original whole, then it can be easily seen why he has achieved, in *The Heart of the Matter*, a novel which comes close to being a masterpiece.

Parenthetically, it should be stated that, though written by a mind that thinks Catholically, there is nothing in this novel that could help to make converts. On the contrary. Greene's hero, Scobie, in his vain effort to achieve some sort of equilibrium between his duty to man and his duty to God, has made such a perfect mess of things, injuring others in the bargain, as to scare any

⊙ JOHN COURNOS, novelist, critic, anthologist, reviews books for the New York *Sun* and the Philadelphia *Bulletin*. Recently he collaborated with Hiram Haydn in editing *A World of Great Stories*, an anthology of world short fiction during the past half-century.

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would-be Catholic away. The same holds true of a novel by another convert, Evelyn Waugh, whose portrait of Sebastian in *Brideshead Revisited* and that of his sister Julia in the same book, with their interminable mental conflicts between what it would be pleasant to do and what it should be one's duty to do, are hardly calculated to win modern-minded adherents to the Catholic Church.

What, however, is important here is that these authors, as well as the other authors to be dealt with in this article, stress the consciousness of responsibility in their characters, and that they think this to be a great virtue in itself, a virtue which makes those who possess it truly human, truly sensible of their duty to God and man.

It is precisely at this point that trouble begins. It is not always possible to reconcile duty to God and love of man. Greene's chief character, Scobie, falls into this devastating dilemma. Scobie is only a police officer serving his country Britain in colonial Africa. True, he pities rather than loves his ever-complaining, ailing wife, and out of this pity he feigns a love for her he does not feel. He borrows money from a dubious character—a marvellously wrought character, by the way, named Jusef—a diamond smuggler, in order to make it possible for his wife to go away for a holiday. Later, he further puts himself into this Jusef's hands (by aiding in the smuggling of a diamond), this time in order to hide his liaison with Helen, a war refugee stranded in these parts.

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but to kill himself. It is a Dostoevskian theme with all the Dostoevskian play of nuance on the duality of the human psyche.

But the Catholic school of fiction, if one may call it such, has no monopoly on consciousness of human responsibility. The Existentialists, indeed, are scarcely less obsessed with it; their approach to the problem, however, is wholly different from the *a priori* method of the Catholics. The latter inevitably begins with the acceptance of God, from which point proceed the processes of human behavior; whereas with the Existentialists, He does not come into the picture at all, and allowing, theoretically, that He could, it would be as the last thing and not the first. The Existentialist human being is always in the process of becoming; he is, by virtue of existence and how he conducts that existence, only limited by his potentiality as he pursues his way along "the roads of freedom" (which is the title of Sartre's trilogy, consisting of *The Age of Reason*, *The Reprieve* and the as yet unpublished *The Last Chance*). It is a new version of Emerson's "Be yourself." The obvious danger was that if you followed this advice, you merely became an Emersonian; so in this instance, you run the chance of becoming an Existentialist, without arriving at a solution of the real problem: that of being yourself and at the same time achieving that very dubious state called freedom, one of the themes of *The Age of Reason.*

The question of purpose enters here, yet the best we are assured of is that we don't know where we're going, but we're on the way, as the popular song has it. Can man exist happily, or even contentedly, without more than a *blind* purpose? For that is what it amounts to. This perhaps is the logical outcome of an age which has lost God, which has become hopelessly skeptical as a result of the scientific spirit, and has replaced what has been lost with what Prof. W. T. Stace of Princeton calls "ethical relativity." (See his remarkable essay, "Man against the Dark," in the September *Atlantic.*)

In short, while the Catholic novelists, on the assumption that God has created man in His own image, contend that essence

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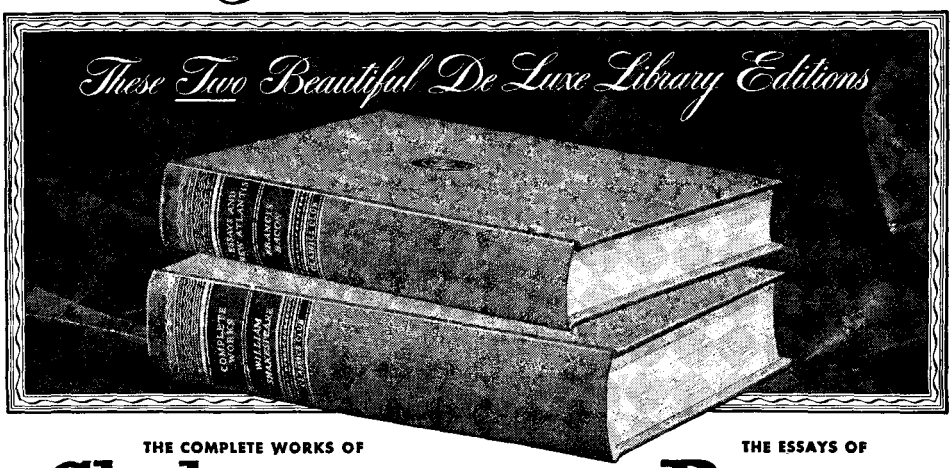

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must precede existence, the Existentialists, on the contrary, contend that only existence can be productive of essence, and hence must precede it, thus carrying out, perhaps, another Frenchman's, Voltaire's, dictum that if God has created man in His own image, man has returned the compliment.

The heart of the matter, from the Existentialist point of view, is presumably that, since there is no God, it is up to man to assume the responsibility, and work out his own salvation without divine guidance.

Mathieu, the hero of Sartre's *The Age of Reason* (a work which technically is traditional, stemming back in its analytical essence to Stendhal), leads the sort of bourgeois existence which he, as a professor of philosophy, rejects theoretically. For seven years he has lived with Marcelle without the intention of marrying her; theoretically she shares his views on the subject of marriage. At the end of seven years a moral crisis occurs. Marcelle finds herself unexpectedly pregnant. It is a fact as inescapable as death and taxes. It must be faced. To shirk it is out of the question. Mathieu suggests abortion, and sets out on a strenuous quest to find the necessary money within forty-eight hours. He fails to face, however, the real issue—that is, the woman herself, and the unborn child. In the first instance, he runs the chance of losing her love, which is in fact what happens; in the second, there is the reasonable assumption that he is planning deliberate feticide. Marcelle herself, with that peculiar realism in human relations for which women are famous, resolves the question by sending her lover packing and attaches herself to the not less dubious character, Daniel, a homosexual, who has the virtue of being kind and protective, sensible of a woman's need in an emergency fraught with basic meanings. Too late Mathieu, involved as he is in problems of freedom, realizes that the only solution lay precisely in an offer of marriage. Cast adrift, and finding himself alone, he consoles himself in that he has through this experience "attained the age of reason."

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ment in various capitals and in Paris during Munich week are adroitly run together without spoiling the sense—tells of the disintegration of France. Here we have the failure of collective responsibility. Moral issues, covering all classes of the population, are introduced, with the clarity for which the author is distinguished.

It is perhaps to be expected that the least important of the Existentialists should be the most explicit (bordering on the didactic). Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Blood of the Others*, takes frankly her motto from Dostoevsky: "Each of us is responsible for everything, and to every human being." The hero of the novel is a member of a resistance group, whose duty it is to send others to death in the name of freedom. He suffers intensely, and in the end consoles himself with the fact of his own suffering, realizing that the blood of the others is his own.

God and Existentialism come to pretty close quarters in *The Plague*. Even though its author, Albert Camus, has denied that he is an Existentialist, in this novel he has much in common with the group—at least in the matter of the obsessive theme of responsibility. In any event, he has produced a fine study, which is a universal allegory (though never departing from realistic terms) of individual and collective responsibility. Out of the odd assortment of characters, three might be used to illustrate the strong hold the theme has on the author, and concurrently on the reader. On the outbreak of the plague in Oran, Algiers, Father Paneloux preaches a powerful sermon, reminding the citizens that God is punishing them for their sins, and that there is no recourse but to repentance. On the other hand, Dr. Rieux, conscientious head of the municipal medical service, is pursuing dutifully his task of helping the afflicted. Rambert, journalist, caught in the quarantined city, which permits no exit or ingress, is yearning to get back to his beloved in Paris and is plotting with smugglers for his escape. As the plague extends into weeks and months without surcease, Father Paneloux, inspired by Dr. Rieux's example, joins in the practical work of succoring the ill, and

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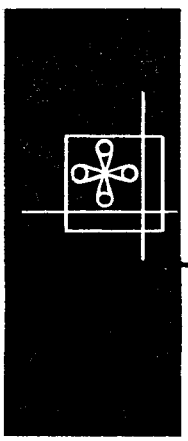

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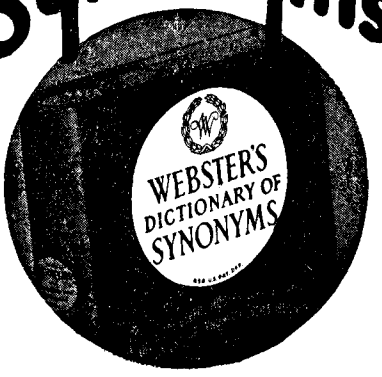

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dies a victim to his zeal. As for Rambert, even while he is at last on the point of effecting his escape, he realizes that he is evading his duty to his fellow men. He too sees his responsibility, and offers his services to the indefatigable Dr. Rieux, who carries on his work even while his own wife is dying in a sanatorium outside the city. The author refers to the "collective destiny" of the city, realizing that the problem of one is the problem of all, and draws the obvious moral that the entire world is just such a prison spot as plague-afflicted Oran, and that there is no remedy, except mutual realization and mutual assistance, which can guarantee a return to sanity and to health.

The fiction of Catholicism and Existentialism both offer a challenge to action, and they offer a challenge to each other. Each preaches, by indirection, "freedom of the will," and individual responsibility; their definitions of these things differ materially. Each, theoretically and practically, contains an innate contradiction.

The first is bound to a religion which, among other things, demands obedience, a rigid adherence to centuries-old laws which forbid deviation—what price free will? The second demands obedience to self, its freedoms are circumscribed by responsibilities to self and, through self, by responsibilities to others. There being no God, each man is, in a manner of speaking, a sort of God in himself. Action is necessary. In Sartre's words, "To do and while doing make oneself, and be nothing but the self which one has made." It is assumed that man possesses free will, that he is free to choose his actions from his birth, and this has moral implications. For, again, as Sartre says, "There is not one of our acts which, in creating the man we wish to be, does not at the same time create an image of the man as we think he ought to be." And does this not, again, hark back, to our own Emerson—call him Transcendentalist, Existentialist, or what you will —when he wrote, "Man is but dwarf of himself"?

It is further assumed that individuals of character can help to recreate the human species. A pretty tall order this, if also the voice of idealism and of courage. That the

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Catholic Church should challenge this point of view is not surprising. And time alone can tell which school of thought shall have ascendancy in our fiction, which, we have so often been told, is a reflection of life (although both these schools apparently have some faith in Wilde's dictum that "Life copies art").

Nor does Aldous Huxley let us down easily in *Ape and Essence*, the most savage satire on the human race since Swift. He, too, has something to say about human responsibility, individual and collective. He projects his newer "brave new world" into the future—the twenty-second century, to be exact—a world given over to the devil, Belial, who, with man's connivance, has wrested the world away from God; a world which science, unmoderated by religion, has turned into a world of human apes, who lead Einsteins and Faradays on a leash. It is a topsy-turvy world of man's own making, independent of God. Thus speaketh Aldous Huxley through one of the characters, "Love casts out fear; but conversely fear casts out love. Fear also casts out intelligence, casts out goodness, casts out all thought of beauty and truth. . . . And fear, my good friends, is the very basis and foundation of modern life."

Well, here is something which offers us the basis for still another school of fiction, the school which should teach man to deal with this, perhaps the most sinister and the most fatal of all evils it is left to man to deal with. Our feet on the ground, let us look up at the sky and behold the stars, unmindful of the fact that one day out of those same skies some enemy may Pearl-Harbor us with an atom bomb. Truly, "God hath made man upright; but they have sought many inventions."

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(continued from page 112)

"patent blitzkriegs" (a descriptive term actually used by one concern engaged in the practice) that coerced competitors by patent infringement suits or threats of such suits, by the use of "umbrella patents," "accordion patents," "bottle-neck patents" and patent pools. The evidence is available, for all who wish to be realists, that through patent pools and associated licensing techniques, giant cartels have been able to keep smaller manufacturers from producing unless they abide by discriminatory rules and regulations concerning the division of the field, production and prices. The fairly well-known case of the patent pool of the Standard Oil-I. G. Farbenindustrie cartel is merely illustrative of a widespread practice.

Yet the patent system remains almost sacrosanct. Not only did no revamping of the patent structure follow these startling revelations, but the government suits against monopolies that have used patents as instruments of commercial aggression now lie dormant. Worthy of serious reflection is the fact that the 1948 budget appropriation of the anti-trust division of the Department of Justice, which prosecutes such cases, is only $2,400,000, while that of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) is $42,400,000. Clearly something more than our present patent system affords is needed for the fullest promotion of science and the useful arts in the interests of the common man.

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MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

The Rise of Fantasy in Literature

The newcomer who wanders for the first time in the luxuriant jungle of fantasy literature finds himself at sea or up in the air with too many compasses pointing in different directions. Not only is the number of fantasy books published, or republished, enormous (*The Checklist of Fantasy Literature*, recently published, contains over 200 pages of titles and authors), but the voluminous critical exegesis attached to hundreds of volumes are written with a partisan enthusiasm unhappily unknown to ordinary criticism. Mr. August Derleth as editor, prefacer and author, is an old hand at the business. I cheerfully admit to the errors he has noted in my article in your Summer issue, though I could have sworn that I had read Algernon Blackwood's "The Doll" some time ago in an English magazine or book.

It is inevitable that in this mushroom growth of fantasy books, new and old, in and out of copyright, or borrowed from extinct magazines, there must be a great deal of confusion and some literary skullduggery, from which, I am sure, Mr. Derleth himself has keep sternly aloof.

Harrison Smith
25 West 45 Street
New York 19, N. Y.

Jane Austen, Karl Marx, and the Aristocratic Dance

Mr. David Daiches' beguiling confession of an ambivalent gravitational pull toward the Cavaliers and toward Cromwell, in his penetrating and charming "Jane Austen, Karl Marx, and the Aristocratic Dance," makes me think he would be amused to know how completely in agreement with him is Samuel Butler, who wrote in his notebooks, under the title "Swells":

"People ask complainingly what swells have done, or do, for society, that they should be able to live without working. The good swell is the creature toward which all nature has been groaning and travailing until now. He is an ideal. He shows what may be done in the way of good breeding, health, looks, temper and fortune. He realizes men's dreams of themselves, at any rate vicariously. He preaches the gospel of grace. The world is like a spoilt child, it has this good thing given it at great expense and then says it is useless!"

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Milton R. Sapirstein, M.D., is a practicing physician in New York City, affiliated with the Neuropsychiatric services of Mt. Sinai Hospital and Columbia University.

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